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PATRIOTISM IN LITERATURE

BY
JOHN DRINKWATER, M.A.,



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TO
HENRY NEWBOLT
POET AND PATRIOT

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AUTHOR'S NOTE

THIS is an essay on patriotism, not a patriotic anthology. It might perhaps more appropriately, though less concisely, have been called *Patriotism with Illustrations from Literature*. That is to say, it has not been my purpose to survey the whole of literature, or even the whole of English literature, but to use any literature as arbitrarily, and as freely, as I liked, to illustrate a theme. I have relied chiefly on English literature for two reasons: first, that I have a more familiar acquaintance with it than with any other, and second, that many of my readers are likely to be in the same position. And although our literature on this subject, as on most others, is deeply in the debt of the ancients, it has contrived to say what it wanted to satisfactorily enough on its own account.

I have deliberately made excursions here and there into by-paths of speculation, but

they have, I believe, always led me back naturally enough to my main theme; and writers have always known that there is no tyranny less properly respected than that of a title.

JOHN DRINKWATER.

London,

February 1924.

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PATRIOTISM IN LITERATURE

CHAPTER I

PUBLIC PATRIOTISM: THE STATESMAN

PATRIOTISM, or love of country, is a theme that has been hardly less engaging to literature than the eternal inspirations of the seasons, and beauty's passing, and the approach of death, or the love of woman itself. Infinitely various though the emotion may be in its expression, it is, nevertheless, almost universal. Sometimes, it is true, the love of country takes on a strange and almost unrecognisable character. There are men, as we shall see, whose pride in their homeland incites them to habitual reproach. There are even a few who may be said not to love their country at all, unhappy spirits, who, indeed, are at odds with mankind and spend their disaffection chiefly upon their own country because it is the nearest to hand. But these last are but a

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small, though often violently irritant, minority in society, and although their voices are loud, the world goes its way through the ages unconcerned and unaffected by them. Those others, who, loving their country, yet seldom have a good word for her, are not always the least valuable patriots. But for the present our business is with the generality of men and women who consciously love the country of which they are citizens, and are ready to confess their loyalty in their words and in their lives.

This majority consists of two clearly definable groups. In the first, and the smaller group, are the citizens who in some way or another make public service to the State part of their professed occupation in life. The second, and by far the larger group, is composed of the millions of men and women who serve the State not in any public office or employment, but in the faithful conduct of their own private affairs. It is upon the first of these groups that the responsibility rests of expressing the will and the spirit of the second group in political action and the assertion of national ideals in unequivocal terms. The duty thus incurred brings with it particular opportunity for giving clear

and widely communicated utterance to the patriotic idea plainly and directly, and we should, in fact, find that in any representative selection of patriotic literature liberal attention would have to be given to the utterances of statesmen and acknowledged leaders of the people in political activity. But that vastly greater group, the people whom the statesman represents, or is supposed to represent, in the shaping or directing of policy, is by no means inarticulate in its patriotic fervours. It is from them that has come the great body of literature, and of poetry in particular, a body never more vigorous and impressive than it has been of late years, that tells of the tenderness with which the individual citizen cherishes and remembers his homeland, the very acre, as it were, of his own possession, the soil in which, come what chance may, his roots are fixed. This patriotism—sometimes it would seem so narrowly local as to overlook the presiding interests of the State, and yet in truth an emotion from which the State draws a great part of its establishment and honour—will claim due attention in this essay. But first we are to consider some characteristic examples of the literature that has grown up round public service or statesmanship.

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It is to be remembered that public office, while it affords peculiar opportunities for patriotic exposition, is also peculiarly beset by the temptations of false prophecy. Nothing more readily corrupts the judgment and distorts the vision than the atmosphere of the hustings and the heat of debate. A man is never more likely to deceive himself than in the rhetoric of the platform, and so it is that of the many thousands of speeches made year by year in the stress of political conflict, only a stray one here and there will seem anything but false and hollow under examination a month after its delivery. To accuse politicians as a class of dishonest designs in consequence is to be too exacting. But that the majority of them encourage a habit in their minds which is all against constructive thought and fearless expression there can be no doubt. The successful politician more often than not is a man who is content to modulate his intelligence to what he conceives to be the average level of his audience, and to be careless of the censure that he may earn from the few wise and just men among them. Our own generation has not been more wanting than others in examples of men who have risen to the highest eminence in the State by

the advancement of principles which, unless the self-deception has become complete, they cannot but despise in their conscience. We have all heard such as these, appealing to passions of aggression and cupidity which, although happily they are not dominant in the individual, are easily aroused in the mob, and regarding with indifference the reproach of the few who cannot be so seduced. Universal suffrage has much to commend it; it is indeed, on the whole, the least unsatisfactory form of election that can be suggested for our modern needs. But as Bolingbroke, a statesman and patriot who will have a good deal to say to our purpose, asserts: "We must tell ourselves once for all, that perfect schemes are not adapted to our imperfect State," and universal suffrage, indispensable as it is, unquestionably has the defect of betraying all but the very finest minds in public office into the flattery of what they know to be unworthy ideals, and the fear of any resolute advocacy of their own best understanding. A vote is a vote, and ninety votes stampeded by unscrupulous oratory are worth exactly nine times as much as ten votes persuaded by knowledge, by an incorruptible temper, and by a responsible investigation of truth. And

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so it is that our State, while it is generally happy in being rid of tyrants, is also generally embarrassed, and even distracted, for want of leaders.

So long ago as 1713, Henry St. John, Lord Bolingbroke, the minister who under Queen Anne was responsible for the Peace of Utrecht, discovered that honest thinking and plain speaking could not indefinitely survive the onsets of political intrigue. The story of his fall and exile, with a price, as it were, upon his head, does not concern us here. But in his enforced retirement from public life he wrote certain discourses in which are to be found some of the clearest deliberations upon patriotism ever written by an Englishman. Bolingbroke was accused by Walpole of being a danger to the State, on no evidence that will now stand scrutiny; honest men are apt to be thought that, and Bolingbroke, whatever may have been his faults of political temper, was an honest man. Also he had taste and learning, was the friend of Swift and Gray and Congreve and Pope, the last-named of whom honoured him with the dedication of his *Essay on Man*, and he had the admirable lucidity of mind that means the gift of style to a writer. And so, degraded from public

office, and forbidden the opportunity of service that was his only ambition, he, nevertheless, suffered his misfortune with perfect dignity, and never for a moment allowed the remorselessness of his political enemies to embitter his love of England. Bolingbroke's view is necessarily that of the statesman in authority, authority, as he insisted, of no less responsibility in opposition than in government. Of the virtue of patriotism in the private citizen he has little to say; indeed, as is not unnatural in a man pleading a special cause, he is almost inclined to forget the immense part that the private citizen's loyalty plays in the life of the State:

“I have sometimes represented to myself the *vulgar*, who are accidentally distinguished by the titles of king and subject, of lord and vassal, of nobleman and peasant; and the *few* who are distinguished by nature so essentially from the herd of mankind, that (figure apart) they seem to be of another species, in this manner. The former come into the world, and continue in it, like *Dutch travellers* in a foreign country. Everything they meet has the grace of novelty:

and they are fond alike of every thing that is new. They wander about from one object, to another, of vain curiosity, or inelegant pleasure. If they are industrious, they shew their industry in copying signs, and collecting mottos and epitaphs. They loiter, or they trifle away their whole time: and their presence or their absence would be equally unperceived, if caprice or accident did not raise them often to stations, wherein their stupidity, their vices, or their follies, make them a public misfortune. The latter come into the world, or at least continue in it after the effects of surprize and inexperience are over, like men who are sent on more important errands. They observe with distinction, they admire with knowledge. They may indulge themselves in pleasure; but as their industry is not employed about trifles, so their amusements are not made the business of their lives. Such men cannot pass unperceived thro a country. If they retire from the world, their splendor accompanies them, and enlightens even the obscurity of their retreat. If they take a part in public life, the effect is never indifferent. They

either appear like ministers of divine vengeance, and their course thro the world is marked by desolation and oppression, by poverty and servitude: or they are the guardian angels of the country they inhabit, busy to avert even the most distant evil, and to maintain or to procure peace, plenty, and, the greatest of human blessings, liberty."

From this one may gather Bolingbroke's general temper of mind, with the excusable limitations, suggested rather than explicit, of its attitude towards citizens who have no direct share in government. But, if we admit his preoccupation, as we reasonably may, we shall find Bolingbroke's patriotic argument clear and constructive, and generally unassailable. He has no illusions about those rhetorical dangers that have been mentioned.

"Others with better parts, perhaps with more presumption, but certainly with greater ridicule, have persisted in making these essays towards business all their lives, and have never been able to advance farther, in their political course, than a premeditated harangue on some choice subject. I never saw one of three im-

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portant persons sit down after his oration, with repeated hear-hims ringing in his ears, and inward rapture glowing in his eyes, that he did not recall to my memory the story of a conceited member of some parliament in *France*, who was overheard, after his tedious harangue, muttering most devoutly to himself, *Non nobis, Domine, non nobis, sed nomini tuo ad gloriam !* ”

He insists on the necessity of service being continuous; that it cannot be achieved by capricious enthusiasms; that all persuasion is worthless unless it is founded upon patiently acquired and exact knowledge.

“Look about you, and you will see men eager to speak, and keen to act, when particular occasions press them, or particular motives excite them, but quite unprepared for either: and hence all that superficiality in speaking, for want of information.”

Not that Bolingbroke underrates eloquence, which, he says:

“. . . has charms to lead mankind, and gives a nobler superiority than power

that every dunce may use, or fraud that every knave may employ. But eloquence must flow like a stream that is fed by an abundant spring, and not spout forth a little frothy water on some gaudy day, and remain dry the rest of the year. The famous orators of *Greece* and *Rome* were the statesmen and ministers of those commonwealths. The nature of their governments and the humour of those ages made elaborate orations necessary. They harangued oftener than they debated; and the *ars dicendi* required more study and more exercise of mind, and of body too, among them, than are necessary among us. But as much pains as they took in learning how to conduct the stream of eloquence, they took more to enlarge the fountain from which it flowed."

It is indeed ignorance that is the most malign influence in statesmanship, in public patriotism, as in all human affairs. Nor can this ignorance commonly be excused on the ground of a mere natural poverty of spirit. It is the ignorance of wanton neglect, of idleness. In no age perhaps has this been so unhappily

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true as in our own. Just as universal suffrage, with its resultant evils, must be accepted as the best instrument for its purpose that society has yet been able to design, so it needs the most ardent obscurantist to deny the obvious merits of universal education. But the cause of universal education is not advanced by refusal to see where at present it has failed, as it was bound to do. It is no matter for despair, but the fact is that in our present state of universal half-education we have a very great number of people encouraged by the ever-growing activities of modern journalism to express themselves in public upon all manner of subjects on which they are not in any sufficient sense informed. The little learning that is a dangerous thing has never played such havoc with the public mind as it does to-day. On all hands we find pretended critics of painting, of music, of poetry, of the drama, of the conduct of life and of the principles of government, who have hardly a smattering of knowledge of the tradition of the arts, of social philosophy or of history, and, consequently, are wholly without standards by which to judge. Instructed people when confronted with this ignorance are unharmed by it, knowing it for what it is, but we

are all uninstructed on many things, and we easily form a habit of listening to these oracles without examining their credentials, and are duly misinformed for our pains. Both in the arts and in public life there are men who have honourably submitted themselves to the necessary discipline, and have acquired a general knowledge from which to argue to the particular case, but they are few. Universal education in its present early stage of development is followed by a cynical dissemination of ill-considered conclusions that makes any clear and well-founded public opinion among us on any subject almost impossible. It is to be repeated, that this is not to dismiss the system as a failure; it is merely to recognise the most dangerous trouble of its early growth. And it is in public life that the trouble is most dangerous. The arts, however they may be misrepresented by ignorance, remain safely in the care of the artists, who as a body are incorruptible. The artist, whatever else he may be, is never intellectually lazy. But in public life indolence of mind is to be found not only in the critics but also in the administrators. And the present state of Europe is a sufficiently shattering answer to the contention that in our modern society demagogic

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government is more suitable than one influenced by historical learning and the application of ideas drawn from those achievements of the race that have survived all change. It is this loyal and difficult preparation for office that so few of our public men are willing to undertake, and since they are no longer dependent on the suffrages of an instructed few, and know that the popular scrutiny to which they have to submit for their position will be even less securely informed than they are themselves, they are under little enough practical obligation to mend their ways. And so our statesmen, if statesmen they may be called, have, with a very few and often, in the popular mind, discredited exceptions, become bankrupt in the profounder kind of patriotism that controls immediate passions, however noble they may be, to wisely considered and far-seeing ends. They are not lacking in courage, they will fight, they will gesticulate, they will defend our honour to the world in fearless terms, but they will not learn, for the pursuit of learning demands a devotion and a frankness of spirit that they despise, or at best do not understand. They would serve, but they will not instruct themselves nor be instructed. Alexander the Great,

Bacon tells us, "was bred and taught under Aristotle the great philosopher, who dedicated divers of his books of philosophy unto him; he was attended with Callisthenes and divers other learned persons, that followed him in camp, throughout his journeys and conquests." And Montaigne (or Florio in English) praises the Emperor Vespasian for that: "lying sick of the disease whereof he died, he omitted not to endeavour to understand the state of the empire." How shall those triflers in our public life, who ridicule or are unaware of all Aristotles, and make no effort to understand anything, justify Roger Ascham's challenge that "lords be lanterns to lead the life of mean men"?

The public patriotism of statesmanship, then, cannot make up in zeal for the neglect of wisdom. Zeal it must have, but it must be informed beyond caprice. And the great statesmen in history whose utterances have survived the fervours and prejudices of their occasion, and can still move us by their universal fitness, have always been men of learning and intellectual industry. We cannot easily emphasise the argument by pointing to the demagogues whose words have not so endured: their very names are forgotten.

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But to think of Bacon and Milton and Bolingbroke and Burke and Macaulay and Disraeli and Lincoln is to think of men all of whom neglected no opportunities open to them to strengthen their control of government by familiarity with the examples and the ends of history. Hear Edmund Burke lamenting the decay of chivalry—

“If it should ever be totally extinguished, the loss I fear will be great. It is this which has distinguished it under all its forms of government, and distinguished it to its advantage, from the states of Asia, and possibly from those states which flourished in the most brilliant periods of the antique world. It was this which, without confounding ranks, had produced a noble equality, and handed it down through all the gradations of social life. It was this opinion which mitigated kings into companions, and raised private men to be fellows with kings. Without force, or opposition, it subdued the fierceness of pride and power; it obliged sovereigns to submit to the soft collar of social esteem, compelled stern authority to submit to elegance, and gave

a dominating vanquisher of laws to be subdued by manners."

How pointed and persuasive the argument becomes when it is placed thus gently in the perspective of scholarship. And, again, what lessons in irony might not be learnt, by some of our leaders who when pressed have no weapon of defence but a clumsy humour, from the easy historical grasp and range of Burke's answer to the Duke of Bedford:

"I know not how it has happened, but it really seems that, whilst his grace was meditating his well-considered censure upon me, he fell into a sort of sleep. Homer nods; and the Duke of Bedford may dream; and as dreams (even in his golden dreams) are apt to be ill-pieced, and incongruously put together, his grace preserved his idea of reproach to *me*, but took the subject-matter from the crown grants to *his own family*. This is 'the stuff of which his dreams are made.' In that way of putting things together his grace is perfectly in the right. The grants to the house of Russell were so enormous, as not only to outrage

economy, but even to stagger credibility. The Duke of Bedford is the leviathan among all the creatures of the crown. He tumbles about his unwieldy bulk; he plays and frolics in the ocean of the royal bounty. Huge as he is, and whilst 'he lies floating many a rood,' he is still a creature. His ribs, his fins, his whalebone, his blubber, the very spiracles through which he spouts a torrent of brine against his origin, and covers me all over with the spray,—everything of him and about him is the throne. Is it for *him* to question the dispensation of the royal favour?

“I am really at a loss to draw any sort of parallel between the public merits of his grace, by which he justifies the grants he holds; and these services of mine, on the favourable construction of which I have obtained what his grace so much disapproves. In private life, I have not at all the honour of acquaintance with the noble duke. But I ought to presume, and it costs me nothing to do so, that he abundantly deserves the esteem and love of all who live with him. But as to public service, why truly it would not be

more ridiculous for me to compare myself in rank, in fortune, in splendid descent, in youth, strength, or figure, with the Duke of Bedford, than to make a parallel between his services, and my attempts to be useful to my country. It would not be gross adulation, but uncivil irony, to say that he has any public merit of his own to keep alive the idea of the services by which his vast landed pensions were obtained. My merits, whatever they are, are original and personal; his are derivative. It is his ancestor, the original pensioner, that has laid up this inexhaustible fund of merit, which makes his grace so very delicate and exceptionous about the merit of all other grantees of the crown. Had he permitted me to remain in quiet, I should have said, 'tis his estate; that's enough. It is his by law; what have I to do with it or its history? He would naturally have said on his side, 'tis this man's fortune.—He is as good now as my ancestor was two hundred and fifty years ago. I am a young man with very old pensions; he is an old man with very young pensions,—that's all."

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This, it may seem, is the witty employment of an informed mind to personal rather than to patriotic ends. But the passage, apart from its immediate purpose, is a perfect illustration of the temper by which patriotic government thrives. It displays a temper shrewd, humorous, slow to anger but dangerous in attack, and conscious even in its lighter moods of all that history has to show " . . . of exultations, agonies, And love, and man's unconquerable mind." Or, again, hear Milton, eloquent upon an argument now forgotten (though some never despair of renewing it). But how many men have been eloquent on forgotten arguments, when eloquence and argument alike have perished, while Milton's eloquence remains, because it is founded on knowledge, and because he scrutinises his particular idea in the general light of history.

"If we think to regulate printing, thereby to rectify manners, we must regulate all recreations and pastimes, all that is delightful to man. No music must be heard, no song be set or sung, but what is grave and Doric. There must be licensing dancers, that no gesture, motion, or deportment be taught our

youth but what by their allowance shall be thought honest; for such Plato was provided of. It will ask more than the work of twenty licensers to examine all the lutes, the violins, and the guitars in every house; they must not be suffered to prattle as they do, but must be licensed what they may say. And who shall silence all the airs and madrigals, that whisper softness in chambers? The windows also and the balconies must be thought on, there are shrewd books, with dangerous frontispieces set to sale; who shall prohibit them, shall twenty licensers? The villages also must have their visitors to inquire what lectures the bagpipe and the rebec reads even to the ballatry, and the gamut of every municipal fiddler, for these are the countryman's Arcadias and his Monte Mayors. Next, what more national corruption, for which England hears ill abroad, than household gluttony? who shall be the rectors of our daily rioting? and what shall be done to inhibit the multitudes that frequent those houses where drunkenness is sold and harboured? Our garments also should be referred to the

licensing of some more sober work-masters to see them cut into a less wanton garb. Who shall regulate all the mixed conversation of our youth, male and female together, as is the fashion of this country? who shall still appoint what shall be discoursed, what presumed, and no further? Lastly, who shall forbid and separate all idle resort, all evil company? These things will be, and must be; but how they shall be least hurtful, how least enticing, herein consists the grave and governing wisdom of a state. To sequester out of the world into Atlantic and Utopian polities, which never can be drawn into use, will not mend our condition; but to ordain wisely as in this world of evil, in the midst whereof God hath placed us unavoidably."

Finally, in illustration of the authority that patriotism can derive from a due sense of perspective, and from no other faculty, may be chosen Abraham Lincoln's speech on the field of Gettysburg, when in a few words he assembles the past, the present and the future into one sublime emotion.

"Four score and seven years ago our

fathers brought forth on this continent a new nation, conceived in liberty and dedicated to the proposition that all men are created equal. Now we are engaged in a great civil war, testing whether that nation, or any nation so conceived and so dedicated, can long endure. We are met on a great battlefield of that war. We have come to dedicate a portion of that field as a final resting place for those who here gave their lives that that nation might live. It is altogether fitting and proper that we should do this. But, in a larger sense, we cannot dedicate—we cannot consecrate—we cannot hallow—this ground. The brave men, living and dead, who struggled here have consecrated it far above our poor power to add or to detract. The world will little note nor long remember what we say here, but it can never forget what they did here. It is for us, the living, rather to be dedicated here to the unfinished work which they who fought here have thus far so nobly advanced. It is rather for us to be here dedicated to the great task remaining before us—that from these honoured dead we take increased devotion

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to that cause for which they gave the last full measure of devotion; that we here highly resolve that these dead shall not have died in vain; that this nation, under God, shall have a new birth of freedom; and that government of the people, by the people, for the people, shall not perish from the earth."

In summary, then, the statesman who would shape the honourable ideals of his country to action and give back to the people their own confused national ambitions clearly defined, and corrected when necessary by his wider experience, must have this twofold qualification for his work. He must, in the first place, be a man of natural parts; that is, his wit, as Hobbes puts it, must be informed not by acquired but by natural virtues. "By Naturall," says Hobbes in *Leviathan* :

"I mean not, that which a man hath from his Birth: for that is nothing else but Sense; wherein men differ so little one from another, and from brute Beasts, as it is not to be reckoned amongst Vertues. But I mean, that *Wit*, which is gotten by Use onely, and Experience; without Method, Culture, or Instruction.

THIS NATURALL WIT, consisteth principally in two things; *Celerity of Imagining*, (that is, swift succession of one thought to another;) and *steddy direction* to some approved end. On the Contrary, a slow Imagination maketh that Defect, or fault of the mind, which is commonly called DULNESSE, *Stupidity*, and sometimes by other names that signifie slownesse of motion, or difficulty to be moved."

But this natural virtue has to be supported in the statesman by an unwearying discipline of mind. "Ability of Counselling," Hobbes tells us in another part of his book,

"proceedeth from Experience, and long study; and no man is presumed to have experience in all those things that to the Administration of a great Commonwealth are necessary to be known, *No man is presumed to be a good Counsellour, but in such Businesse, as he hath not onely been much versed in, but hath also much meditated on, and considered.* For seeing the businesse of a Commonwealth is this, to preserve the people in Peace at home, and defend them against forraign Invasion, we shall find, it requires great

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knowledge of the disposition of Mankind, of the Rights of Government, and of the nature of Equity, Law, Justice, and Honour, not to be attained without study."

And one of the "best signes of Knowledge of any Art," says Hobbes again is "much conversing in it," and, "The most able Counsellours" are they who have "most knowledge of those things that conduce to the Peace, and Defence of the Common-wealth." The statesman must prepare his mind to the habit of judging what will be the future effects of his present actions from the relation that he has learnt to find always between these actions and the actions of history. Bolingbroke again can instruct us:

"We may observe much the same difference between wisdom and cunning, both as to the objects they propose and to the means they employ, as we observe between the visual powers of different men. One sees distinctly the objects that are near to him, their immediate relations, and their direct tendencies: and a sight like this serves well enough the purpose of those who concern them-

selves no further. The cunning minister is one of those: he neither sees, nor is concerned to see, any further than his personal interests, and the support of his administration require. If such a man overcomes any actual difficulty, avoids any immediate distress, or, without doing either of these effectually, gains a little time by all the low artifice which cunning is ready to suggest and baseness of mind to employ, he triumphs, and is flattered by his mercenary train, on the great event; which amounts often to no more than this, that he got into distress by one series of faults, and out of it by another. The wise minister sees, and is concerned to see further, because government has a further concern: he sees the objects that are distant as well as those that are near, and all their remote relations, and even their indirect tendencies. He thinks of fame as well as of applause, and prefers that, which to be enjoyed must be given, to that which may be bought. He considers his administration as a single day in the great year of government; but as a day that is affected by those which went before, and

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that must affect those which are to follow."

The statesman, while not neglecting the art of public eloquence, must be aware of its seductions, and remember that the rhetoric that will deceive a mob will deceive himself also. Hobbes reminds him of this danger:

"... how able soever be the Counsellours in any affaire, the benefit of their Counsell is greater, when they give every one his Advice, and the reasons of it apart, than when they do it in an Assembly, by way of Orations; and when they have præmeditated, than when they speak on the sudden; both because they have more time, to survey the consequences of action; and are lesse subject to be carried away to contradiction, through Envy, Emulation, or other Passions arising from the difference of opinion."

Finally, he must apply himself not on critical or spectacular occasions only, but at all hours to his service. So that when he is called upon to bring inspiration to the sudden and unexpected turns of policy, he may be able

to do so with an authority based upon long and exact contemplation. As Bernard Bosanquet puts it: "First, your love of country is not to be presented in the light of a yearning for occasional acts of heroism, but as a daily sober loyalty."

CHAPTER II

PUBLIC PATRIOTISM: THE SOLDIER

THE idea familiarly in the minds of most people when patriotism is spoken of, is no doubt that of the citizen's readiness to defend his country with his life. So long as the purity of the ideal is intact, there is, indeed, no expression of patriotic virtue so perfect as this readiness for extreme sacrifice. But around the patriotism of arms there has gathered more confused and even shameful thinking than, perhaps, is to be found in any other preoccupation of the human mind. The chief cause of the trouble is that directly this idea of patriotism is translated into action, as soon as the flags fly and the drums beat, thinking of any kind is made extremely difficult. It may, indeed, be suspected that the drums and the flags, however honourable their origins may be, are wantonly exploited by many people at such a time, to no other end than this, that men should no longer

think. And so we have through history the long struggle for supremacy between militarist ambition and creative intelligence. One of the obstacles in the way of general peace in the world is, it may be allowed, the fact that there come at moments national differences so acute that they are beyond the solution of reason. If, as it would seem, that is the case, then, while it remains the duty of every patriot to work hopefully still towards an increase of wisdom, we may admit, without treachery to our hope, that the age of armed force will not yet pass from the earth. But at least as great an obstacle to this peace, and one of far more contemptible origin, is the fact that there are many people in the world who actively like fighting, or, at least, they actively like the idea of fighting. It can hardly be supposed that more than a very exceptional person here and there actually enjoys the blood and muck and pain of battle itself. Once a man in the Great War assured me that he did this. He was a big game hunter, and he said that bayoneting Germans was, without any moral implication one way or the other, the best sport he had ever known. But he hardly affects the question; he was rather a genial fellow, but an oddity

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who did not mean much in the human argument. But, although there are very few like him, there are many to whom the prospect of war at least is an attractive one, and who, whenever they can, inculcate the principle that war is a decided and not infrequent necessity in the economy of the world. Prussia was a culminating and, one would have thought, for many generations to come at least, a final example of the disaster that this kind of mind, working unregarded in the security of so-called discipline, can bring upon mankind. To confuse militarism of this sort with patriotism is to be bankrupt in intellectual honesty. And with the people who, although they deny it speciously enough, are fatally attracted by the idea of war, we may dismiss those others whose only idea of advancing the national fortunes is to come through oppressive conquest to what they irresponsibly call "world domination." Just as there are people who like the idea of fighting, so there are others whose greatest satisfaction it is to see more and more of the map marked in their own colour, happy in the mere expansion, without any reference to what it means and how it has been achieved. The former of these, it need hardly be remarked, knows as little of the nobility of the true

soldier as does the latter of the genuine ardours of the colonist.

Ruskin pointed out that the soldier's essential honour was not that he killed his enemy, but that he was willing to die. And the spectacle of the man who finds it a sweet and comely thing to lay down his life for his country in distress has inevitably been a constant theme of literature. The devotion of the individual citizen to the State, the consent of the free man in subjection to the prevailing interest of the whole body politic, though they may be reduced to very simple terms of propaganda, are essentially among the most mystical of the ideas that have informed the human mind. Socrates, having offended against the laws of his country and refusing the opportunity to escape from his sentence, maintaining that his duty to the State could not be fulfilled until the moment when he should pay the penalty pronounced against him, is not so paradoxical a figure as he may seem to the mind that has not this mystical sense. We are reminded again of that remark of Bolingbroke's, that "perfect schemes are not adapted to our imperfect State." So in important matters of conduct there is no course that is perfectly coherent

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and intelligible. There are times when a man may honourably subject his will and judgment to those of the State, when in doing so he acts not only against his own apparent interests, but against his own convictions. To do so is not, it may be conceded, a course perfectly consistent with ideal behaviour, but then there is no such perfect consistency possible in the affairs of life. To do so, again, is perhaps to exalt the State from a position of sovereignty to one of divinity which it cannot rightly maintain. But it so happens that, in the practice of the world, there is no person or institution that can profitably be substituted for the State in this authority. So far as human experience goes, the State, imperfect and elusive in character though it may remain, is yet the power, not merely temporal, to which even the wisest men submit themselves for direction, even at times above their own right of judgment.

Freedom of conscience is a problem that has perplexed many good men. It is a principle that is now generally honoured in the modern world so far as religious, and even political and social, opinion is concerned. Beyond opinion, freedom is allowed, in theory

at least, to extend to speech. Although in practice he may too often be intimidated by corrupt influences into forfeiting his rights, a man is supposed, in the theory of modern communities, to be allowed to think, and, within the limitations of the laws of libel, to say what he pleases. Freedom of conscience, however, when it involves questions of liberty of action, is, even in theory, still a much more debatable question. There is a point at which liberty, or licence, is beyond our consideration. Acts of violence which have for their purpose nothing but the personal gain of their perpetrators cannot by any sophistry be held to be a necessary consequence of freedom of thought. We can go no farther towards tolerance of such an action than an occasional mood of sympathy will take us, as, for example, towards a starving man who steals food; our social instinct is against the admission of the principle, as such. There are, however, circumstances when freedom of action, and in this we may include passive resistance to action, becomes a far more complex question, and chiefly so, perhaps, when a nation is in arms. Our own age has had the opportunity of seeing the conscientious objector in many aspects. Now that popular

passions and resentments have subsided, we remember two things about these men who refused, in the name of conscience, to fight; the first, that they amounted in the aggregate to but an extremely small proportion of the total population eligible for active service, and that of this insubstantial minority there were very few members who used a profession of conscience merely to evade a responsibility and a risk of which they were afraid. Nearly every case of conscientious objection that arose in the war was one of genuine conviction that to take arms was unequivocally wrong, and a readiness to stand by that conviction without regard to penalties. It is to be feared that they were sometimes treated by their jailers with displays of bad temper that were not at all creditable to a great nation fighting for its life. But honourable, and even in many cases heroic, as their motives may have been, the great body of instructed and humane opinion was against them, and it was against them because it had some conception of the mystical idea that governs the individual's relation to the State, an idea which, for all their disinterested courage, escaped conscientious objectors altogether. Of the delusions with which the

objectors sometimes played, we need say little here. Well meant as such enterprises were, it was always difficult to appreciate the motives that allowed some people to aid the prosecution of the war in an indirect way while refusing to be combatant themselves. There is not a little humour in a communication addressed by Edward John Trelawny, the friend of Shelley and Byron, to the *London Literary Gazette* in 1831, about the Greek war, in the support of which Byron had died. Trelawny is a little violent of phrase, as was his manner, but he does not speak without point. Speaking of a pacifist body in England, he says :

“ They came forth with a contribution of a thousand pounds to succour a nation of Helots, threatened with extermination, and struggling against measureless odds for existence. Somewhat late, they remembered it was against their narrow and impossible creed to aid and abet, in any shape, either in purse or person, war; and the wise men and elders gathered together to determine how they could extricate themselves from the dilemma into which the younglings of

their flock had plunged them. That their feelings, like a hot horse, had run away with their judgments, was an unprecedented instance. Their natural sagacity, however, did not abandon them: they hit on an expedient, by which they served the Greeks in the manner of Macbeth's juggling witches,

‘That keep the word of promise to our
ear,

And break it to our hope.’

Instead of sending the Greeks the money, or the munitions of war, they assisted in their extermination by sending them nothing but drugs and surgical instruments, and those were selected without judgment.”

The clearest-minded among the objectors, however, made no such compromise, and behaved with a purity of intention that would, if anything could, reconcile us to the principle of liberty of action (passive resistance), even when it is in conflict with an immediate and fundamental necessity of the State. But, with a full measure of respect, we are not so reconciled. There were thousands of people in this country alone during the war who with

such individual argument could have persuaded themselves to this course of action; people who were not hoodwinked by the speciousness of militarists. But always in their deliberation they were met at last by that same mystical concept of the citizen's duty, and many thousands of lives were given in a cause of which militarism and fire-eating journalism had not the faintest perception. To true patriotism there is always behind or above any folly of ministers and officers in authority the abiding virtue of the motherland, and the ties of duty between the citizen and the State are not broken when that duty sometimes has to be performed in an imperfect expression that is imposed upon conduct by such folly.

I will not apologise in this connection for speaking of two patriots whose dramatic presentation I have elsewhere attempted. My play about Robert E. Lee, the supreme figure of the Confederate cause in the American Civil War, gave offence to many Southern Americans, although I should myself have supposed the chief defect of my characterisation was that even the nobility of Lee was not so unblemished as I proposed. But the facts are plain, and they are pertinent to

our present discussion, and they can be stated in a few words. The issue of the Civil War was the right of individual States to secede from the Union. This issue in the particular instance was raised because the Southern States did wish so to secede, and there is no evading the truth that they wished so to secede in protest against the Federal Government's determination to proscribe the institution of slavery, or at least to forbid its extension. Lee did not personally approve of slavery, he disliked it, and voluntarily freed his own slaves. Moreover, he was in his private opinion against the principle of secession as a political measure. At the same time he was a Virginian, and while there is little doubt that if the question had been settled by a plebiscite, his personal vote would have been given against slavery and against secession, when his State, as such, decided to advance the cause of secession by armed force he renounced his private opinion so that he might serve what the State had concluded to be its public interest. "Argument is over, and faith begins." And I cannot conceive of any man of virtue or spirit disapproving of his decision. There was in him, again, the mystical sense that life and

character are greater than points of view. My American critics would have had me make him say: "I will serve Virginia, for two reasons; I am a Virginian, and Virginia is morally right in her position." But Lee did not say that, as any intelligent reading of history must show. What he said in effect was: "I will serve Virginia because I am a Virginian. Whether she is right or wrong is not now the question. These issues are complex, beyond the sure solution of any individual judgment. My opinion is of less consequence than the State's opinion. Argument is over, and faith begins."

And in contrast to Lee may be set that other great American of those years, the greatest American of them all, Abraham Lincoln. I do not know that any responsible suggestion has ever been made that Lincoln was a better person than Lee, or that he was not so good a one, and yet in consideration of the same problem he came to a fundamentally different conclusion. And the fact that Lincoln was himself a part of, indeed a leader of, the Government that gave public expression to the patriotism for which he stood, does not obscure our conviction that nothing would have induced Lincoln to repudiate his State

(which happened to be the United States) even though, shall we say, the Government, and with it his personal opinions, had been defeated in the course of the war; just as we know nothing would have induced Lee to repudiate Virginia. And Lincoln was always aware of the exact distinction between his own private opinion and the opinion of the State of which he was the leader. There was much in Lincoln of persuasiveness and gentle humanity and distaste for dragooning of all kinds, that might have gone to the making of a conscientious objector. But, while no minister of State can ever have suffered more daily anguish in the conduct of war than he, and no intellect can have more shrewdly seen than his the many futilities of war, the essential fallacy of the objector's position was plain to him. I put into his mouth words which, although they are mainly invention, are none of them inconsistent with the essential spirit of Lincoln that is preserved in the records.

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“ . . . I too believe war to be wrong. It is the weakness and the jealousy and the folly of men that make a thing so wrong possible. But we are all weak,

and jealous, and foolish. That's how the world is, ma'am, and we cannot outstrip the world. Some of the worst of us are sullen, aggressive still—just clumsy, greedy pirates. Some of us have grown out of that. But the best of us have an instinct to resist aggression if it won't listen to persuasion. You may say it's a wrong instinct. I don't know. But it's there, and it's there in millions of good men. I don't believe it's a wrong instinct. I believe that the world must come to wisdom slowly. It is for us who hate aggression to persuade men always and earnestly against it, and hope that, little by little, they will hear us. But in the meantime there will come moments when the aggressors will force the instinct to resistance to act. Then we must act earnestly, praying always in our courage that never again will this thing happen. And then we must turn again, and again, and again to persuasion. This appeal to force is the misdeed of an imperfect world. But we are imperfect. We must strive to purify the world, but we must not think ourselves pure above the world. When I had this thing to decide, it would

have been easy to say, 'No, I will have none of it; it is evil, and I will not touch it.' But that would have decided nothing, and I saw what I believed to be the truth as I now put it to you, ma'am. It's a forlorn thing for any man to have this responsibility in his heart. I may see wrongly, but that's how I see."

The soldier's glory, then, is the gift of himself to his country; the offer of his life, and the suspension, if needs be, of his private judgment. That this is an ideal position either of the intellect or in morals nobody can pretend, but, when the country is at war, it is the best position, intellectually and morally, that society has yet been able to devise. And once the decision for arms has been reached, those who serve are rightly objects of public honour and the celebrations of art, though unhappily the emotion that applauds is apt to wither with the occasion, and the cheering is too often followed by neglect. It is, however, not cynical to suppose that rewards and public credit when the battle has been won are not the hero's chief aim, however certainly they may be his due. And so it has always been the soldier moving to,

or engaged in, action, or, at the farthest point of time, on his return from the wars, who has stirred the feelings of the crowd, and the poets in the crowd, while the laurels of the hero whose campaigns have become a story are soon thick with dust. A figure here and there will survive the passing of enthusiasm, a Drake or a Wolfe or a Nelson or a Robert E. Lee, but they are rather symbols, apotheoses of an accumulated national sentiment, than heroes who live solely by their single exploits. It is they who have been most ceremoniously sung, though those obscurer patriots, the "unknown warriors," have not been without their chroniclers.

"Last night, among his fellow roughs,
He jested, quaffed, and swore;
A drunken private of the Buffs,
Who never looked before.
To-day, beneath the foeman's frown,
He stands in Elgin's place,
Ambassador for Britain's crown
And type of all her race.

"Poor, reckless, rude, low-born, untaught,
Bewildered, and alone,
A heart, with English instinct fraught,
He yet can call his own.

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Ay, tear his body limb from limb,
Bring cord, or axe, or flame:
He only knows, that not through *him*
Shall England come to shame."

So wrote Francis Doyle of his Private in the Buffs, and so Sir Henry Newbolt, of his hero without a name:

"The sand of the desert is sodden red,—
Red with the wreck of a square that
broke;—

The Gatling's jammed and the Colonel dead,
And the regiment blind with dust and
smoke.

The river of death has brimmed his banks,
And England's far, and Honour a name,
But the voice of a schoolboy rallies the
ranks:

'Play up! play up! and play the
game!'"

So, four hundred and eighty years before Christ, "The austere manner in which the children of the Lacedæmonians were educated rendered them undaunted on the field of battle, and enabled Leonidas with a small band to resist the millions of the army of Xerxes," and in the noblest of all epitaphs the poet wrote his immortal praise over the graves

of the nameless dead at Thermopylæ : " Here we lie, O Lacedæmonians, obeying your orders." And so, again to-day, Mr. Lascelles Abercrombie, in lines that can survive even the test of being set in such company:

" These who desired to live, went out to death;
Dark underground their golden youth is
lying.

We live: and there is brightness in our
breath

They could not know—the splendour of
their dying."

Of the literature that has gathered round famous names in the roll of heroism, a volume could be compiled. The praise has not always been inspired by the heat of action. Tennyson, while Wellington is passing to St. Paul's, reflects:

" Yea, let all good things await
Him who cares not to be great,
But as he saves or serves the state.
Not once or twice in our rough island-story,
The path of duty was the way to glory:
He that walks it, only thirsting
For the right, and learns to deaden
Love of self, before his journey closes.

He shall find the stubborn thistle bursting
 Into glossy purples, which outredden
 All voluptuous garden-roses.

Not once or twice in our fair island-story,
 The path of duty was the way to glory :
 He, that ever following her commands,
 On with toil of heart and knees and hands,
 Thro' the long gorge to the far light has won
 His path upward, and prevail'd,
 Shall find the toppling crags of Duty scaled
 Are close upon the shining table-lands
 To which our God himself is moon and sun.
 Such was he: his work is done.

But while the races of mankind endure,
 Let his great example stand
 Colossal, seen of every land,
 And keep the soldier firm, the statesman
 pure:

Till in all lands and thro' all human story
 The path of duty be the way to glory."

And it is the idea of service done, rather
 than the ardour of heroism in achievement,
 that Scott remembers in his lines on Nelson:

"Nor mourn ye less his perished worth,
 Who bade the conqueror go forth,
 And launched that thunderbolt of war
 On Egypt, Hafnia, Trafalgar ;

Who, born to guide such high emprise,
For Britain's weal was early wise;
Alas! to whom the Almighty gave,
For Britain's sins, an early grave!
His worth, who in his mightiest hour
A bauble held the pride of power,
Spurned at the sordid lust of pelf,
And served his Albion for herself."

It is Campbell who tunes his praise to the
sounds of valour:

"Of Nelson and the North
Sing the glorious day's renown,
When to battle fierce came forth
All the might of Denmark's crown,
And her arms along the deep proudly
shone;
By each gun the lighted brand
In a bold determined hand,
And the Prince of all the land
Led them on."

And Burns with :

"Scots, wha hae wi' Wallace bled,
Scots, wham Bruce has aften led,
Welcome to your gory bed,
Or to victorie!"

And Milton, superbly in:

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“Cromwell, our chief of men, who through a
cloud
Not of war only, but detractions rude,
Guided by faith and matchless fortitude,
To peace and truth thy glorious way hast
ploughed,
And on the neck of crownèd Fortune proud
Hast reared God's trophies, and his work
pursued,
While Darwen stream, with blood of Scots
imbrued,
And Dunbar field, resounds thy praises
loud,
And Worcester's laureate wreath: yet
much remains
To conquer still; peace hath her victories
No less renowned than war: new foes arise,
Threatening to bind our souls with secular
chains.
Help us to save free conscience from the paw
Of hireling wolves whose gospel is their
maw.”

Between, as it were, the still reflection of
Tennyson and Scott, and the closer battle of
these other poems, may be placed one stanza of
Mr. Thomas Hardy's magnificent “Boatman's
Song” in *The Dynasts*:

“In the wild October night-time, when the
wind raved round the land,
And the Back-sea met the Front-sea, and
our doors were blocked with sand,
And we hear the drub of Dead-man’s Bay,
where bones of thousands are,
We knew not what the day had done for us
at Trafalgar,
Had done,
Had done,
For us at Trafalgar!”

It must be admitted that when our philosophy has said all it can, the drums and the flags will sometimes have their way with us, inducing all the fervours of combat that the militarists could desire. “Arms and the man I sing,” cries Virgil at the opening of his Epic, and sometimes it must be allowed he sings them with an unholy zeal, while we do not withhold our admiration.

“Beware

Of entrance to a quarrel; but, being in,
Bear’t that the opposed may beware of thee.”

That, perhaps, is about as near to virtue as we can get. The dangerous people are they who are eager always for an excuse to fight, not they who fight well when once they are

engaged. And so, while we are clear that the soldier's honour is that he is steadfast unto death, and that the only honourable cause of war is the resistance to tyranny or the defence of the homeland, we cannot, once the issue is joined, escape the necessary consequence, that the causes will often be lost sight of in the heat of conflict itself. Men who have come back from battle bring no romantic accounts of it; they speak of blasphemies and terror. And yet in battle there must have been always something more than this, a thing of the moment, that should have no allurements in prospect, and certainly has no place in recollection, which nevertheless has not seldom stirred the imaginations both of the fighters themselves and of the lookers-on. The joy of action itself, as distinct from the sense of a great cause faithfully served, has inspired many graphic passages in history and fiction, but when the soldiers themselves have found expression for it, it has generally been in a refrain of swashbuckling or of a grimly humorous realism, either, with some gallantry, in the mood of:

“If enemies oppose us,
When England is at wars,

With any foreign nations,
We fear not wounds nor scars;
Our roaring guns shall teach 'em
Our valour for to know,
Whilst they reel in the keel,
When the stormy winds do blow."

Or, certainly with no less, in that of,

"Hold down your head, Fusilier,
Hold down your head, Fusilier.
There's a b— great Hun
With a b— great gun,
And he'll blow off your head, Fusilier."

which is one in spirit with the song that was sung freely at the front, in the ear of authority, with the tragically witty burden,

"We want to go home."

As is well known, when the emotion of action itself, during the Great War, was more poetically, if not more pointedly, expressed, it was generally in terms of almost ferocious denial, as in the war poems of Mr. Siegfried Sassoon and others. Now and again, however, a soldier has transfigured the joy of battle into the word of the imagination, spiritualising an experience so generally discredited by those

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who have been able to prove it. It may be difficult to accept the doctrine, but it is impossible to question the high character or the poetry of Julian Grenfell's *Into Battle*:

“The naked earth is warm with Spring,
And with green grass and bursting trees
Leans to the sun's gaze glorying,
And quivers in the sunny breeze;
And Life is Colour and Warmth and Light,
And a striving evermore for these;
And he is dead who will not fight;
And who dies fighting has increase.

“The fighting man shall from the sun
Take warmth, and life from the glowing
earth;
Speed with the light-foot winds to run,
And with the trees to newer birth;
And find, when fighting shall be done,
Great rest, and fullness after dearth.

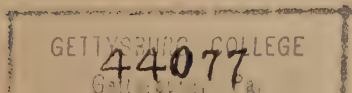
“The blackbird sings to him: ‘Brother,
brother,
If this be the last song you shall sing
Sing well, for you may not sing another;
Brother, sing.’

“And when the burning moment breaks,
And all things else are out of mind,
And only Joy of Battle takes
Him by the throat, and makes him
blind.—”

With this may be placed these words from an unpublished letter of Rupert Brooke's, written after the Antwerp expedition. “Not a bad place and time to die, Belgium, 1915? I want to kill my Prussian first. Better than coughing out a civilian soul amid bedclothes and disinfectant and gulping nieces in 1950.”

Turning from the soldiers themselves to the poets, examples of this fervour are plentiful, and we need not, perhaps, suspect them too shrewdly because they are vicarious. Two well known passages, both inspired by one occasion, may fittingly stand for the substance of them all.

“Fair stood the wind for France
When we our sails advance,
Nor now to prove our chance
Longer will tarry;
But putting to the main,
At Caux, the mouth of Seine,
With all his martial train,
Landed King Harry.



“ And taking many a fort,
 Furnish’d in warlike sort,
 Coming toward Agincourt
 In happy hour,
 Skirmishing day by day
 With those that stopp’d his way,
 Where the French gen’ral lay
 With all his power:

.
 “ And turning to his men,
 Quoth our brave Henry then,
 ‘ Though they to one be ten,
 Be not amazèd:
 Yet have we well begun;
 Battles so bravely won
 Have ever to the sun
 By fame been raisèd.’

.
 “ Gloster, that duke so good,
 Next of the royal blood,
 For famous England stood,
 With his brave brother;
 Clarence, in steel most bright,
 Though but a maiden knight,
 Yet in that furious fight
 Scarce such another.

“ Warwick in blood did wade,
 Oxford the foe invade,

And cruel slaughter made
Still as they ran up;
Suffolk his axe did ply,
Beaumont and Willoughby
Bare them right doughtily,
Ferrers and Fanhope.

“ Upon Saint Crispin’s Day
Fought was this noble fray
Which fame did not delay
To England to carry.
O when shall English men
With such acts fill a pen?
Or England breed again
Such a King Harry? ”

So Drayton, and, even more famously, Shakespeare makes Henry V speak in the same strain before battle from the English Court at Agincourt.

“ *Westmoreland*. O! that we now had here
But one ten thousand of those men in
England
That do no work to-day.

King Henry. What’s he that wishes so?
My cousin Westmoreland? No, my fair
cousin:

If we are mark'd to die, we are enow
To do our country loss; and if to live,
The fewer men, the greater share of honour.
God's will! I pray thee, wish not one man
more.

By Jove, I am not covetous for gold,
Nor care I who doth feed upon my cost;
It yearns me not if men my garments wear;
Such outward things dwell not in my desires:

But if it be a sin to covet honour,
I am the most offending soul alive.
No, faith, my coz, wish not a man from
England:

God's peace! I would not lose so great an
honour

As one man more, methinks, would share
from me,

For the best hope I have. O! do not wish
one more:

Rather proclaim it, Westmoreland, through
my host,

That he which hath no stomach to this fight,
Let him depart; his passport shall be made,
And crowns for convoy put into his purse:

We would not die in that man's company

That fears his fellowship to die with us.

This day is call'd the feast of Crispian:

He that outlives this day, and comes safe
home,

Will stand a tip-toe when this day is nam'd,
And rouse him at the name of Crispian.

He that shall live this day, and see old age,
Will yearly on the vigil feast his neighbours,
And say, 'To-morrow is Saint Crispian':

Then will he strip his sleeve and show his
scars,

And say 'These wounds I had on Crispin's
day.'

Old men forget; yet all shall be forgot,

But he'll remember with advantages

What feats he did that day. Then shall
our names,

Familiar in his mouth as household words,

Harry the king, Bedford and Exeter,

Warwick and Talbot, Salisbury and
Gloucester,

Be in their flowing cups freshly remember'd.

This story shall the good man teach his son;

And Crispin Crispian shall ne'er go by,

From this day to the ending of the world,

But we in it shall be remembered;

We few, we happy few, we band of brothers;

For he to-day that sheds his blood with me

Shall be my brother; be he ne'er so vile

This day shall gentle his condition:

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And gentlemen in England now a-bed
Shall think themselves accurs'd they were
not here,
And hold their manhoods cheap whiles any
speaks
That fought with us upon Saint Crispin's
day."

But these celebrations of warlike ardour,
greatly stirring as they are, leave something
of the finer spirit of military patriotism un-
expressed. It comes to us again in Lovelace's:

"Tell me not, Sweet, I am unkind,
That from the nunnery
Of thy chaste breast and quiet mind
To war and arms I fly.

"True, a new mistress now I chase,
The first foe in the field;
And with a stronger faith embrace
A sword, a horse, a shield.

"Yet this inconstancy is such
As you too shall adore;
I could not love thee, Dear, so much,
Loved I not Honour more."

And we find it most perfectly realised in sudden

simplicities of speech, when poets have been moved by the spectacle of heroic sacrifice, or when the heroes themselves have some casual word of utter faith in the hour of supreme peril. Of the former, such is Mr. Masfield's.

“Then sadly rose and left the well-loved
Downs,
And so by ship to sea, and knew no more
The fields of home, the byres, the market
towns,
Nor the dear outline of the English shore,

“But knew the misery of the soaking trench,
The freezing in the rigging, the despair
In the revolting second of the wrench
When the blind soul is flung upon the
air. . . .”

and of the latter, I know no more perfect example than a letter, written on the morning of action to his wife by a Captain Duff, who was killed at Trafalgar.

“Monday morning, October 1, 1805

“My dearest Sophia, I have just time to tell you we are going into action with the Combined Fleet. I hope and trust in

God we shall all behave as becomes us, and that I may yet have the happiness of taking my beloved wife and children in my arms. Norwich (his son) is quite well and happy. I have, however, ordered him off the Quarter Deck. Yours ever, and most truly, GEORGE DUFF."

Of challenging laments upon the death of men so noble as this, literature is full, and of the poignancy of :

"O lang will his Lady
Look owre at the Castle Downe,
Ere she see the Earl of Murray
Come sounding through the town."

But these elegiac strains are not directly within our purpose, which has been rather to suggest the spirit of patriotism in arms of the man, in Wordsworth's words,

"Who, whether praise of him must walk the
earth
For ever, and to noble deeds give birth,
Or he must fall, to sleep without his fame,
And leave a dead unprofitable name—
Finds comfort in himself and in his cause;

And, while the mortal mist is gathering,
draws

His breath in confidence of Heaven's
applause:

This is the happy Warrior; this is He
That every Man in arms should wish to be."

CHAPTER III

PRIVATE PATRIOTISM: THE CITIZEN

THE patriotic responsibility of the statesman and the soldier, whatever their means of fulfilling it and the nature of their motives may be, is at least clear. The statesman's function is to assist his country in right government and national security. When the fools have been dismissed, the wise men may still wrangle among themselves as to which are the properest ways of achieving those ends, but as to the propriety of the ends they are agreed. The best patriot among statesmen is, by common consent, he who most freely secures these advantages. The soldier's function, again, is to defend his country from aggression with his life. He may sometimes be mistaken as to the nature of the issues for which he is fighting, and he may sometimes allow the purity of his motives to be seduced by the tumult, but the ideal of his patriotic

ambition cannot be obscured by these accidents. In considering the patriotism of the private citizen, however, the duty that he owes to the State, we are confronted with a much more complicated problem. This duty may be regarded in two aspects, the one natural duty, the other political duty. Natural duty, springing from the affections of man, from his delight, born equally of instinct and habit in the environment in which he has grown, is the relatively simple aspect of private patriotism; it will be discussed in a later chapter. But the private citizen's political duty to the State, the exact place that he bears in the social contract, and the responsibilities arising from this position, have been, and continue to be, controversial questions of the most provocative kind. If one half of the best philosophical thought of the world has been devoted to an analysis of the character of man as a unit, the other half has concerned itself with the problem of men in community, with theories of government. These theories in all their variety, aim, one and all, at establishing the exact position that the individual bears in relation to the State, and they have ranged up and down the centuries across every gradation of idea from

that of absolute depotism to that of loosest anarchy.

It seems clear on the face of it, that no formula can be discovered that would reconcile the patriotic duty of the citizen to the State under government at one of these extremes of political thought with his duty under government at the other. The patriotic idea governing the private citizen's life under an absolute monarchy, with the divine right of kings passing as an accepted doctrine, cannot easily be supposed to coincide with, shall we say, the patriotic idea of governing the life of the private citizen in Soviet Russia; and yet, if we can discover it, there must be something more of permanence in the character of private patriotism than could be the case if these violent alterations in systems of government were in truth as important as they are sometimes, indeed generally, supposed to be. It may, perhaps, be found that there is behind any instrument of government a spiritual force, secure beyond the changes of authority, profoundly affecting the lives of the people, and commonly overlooked, or at least underrated, by political theory.

And first it is to be noted that the political philosophers have always been sharply divided

on one fundamental matter of opinion. Are man's social instincts on the whole bad or good? Did primitive society evolve a form of government for the purpose of saving itself from itself, or was the evolution due to an instinct on the part of the individual for devising an instrument whereby he could contribute something to the general good? In a community of a hundred people, did the principle of all against all become so destructive and intolerable that everybody was willing to subject himself to a central, and even a tyrannous, authority, in order to have done with this unendurable state of insecurity, or did every one slowly acquire a sense that such a central authority might become, as it were, a clearing-house through which the ideas and the virtues of the individual could be passed to the common good? The question is one about which a great many people probably have no very definite views, it even not occurring to them, perhaps, that there is such a question. But it is one that has been actively present always in the minds of the constructive political thinkers, upon whose deliberations the forms of government have largely depended in history. For it cannot be doubted that any form of government,

whether it be autocratic or democratic, is more precisely the creation of a few men who applied their minds to the problem, than of the great popular mind that remains, even in enlightened periods, largely uninformed and unorganised in matters of political thought. It is, indeed, not mere casuistry to contend that behind the deliberations of the few is the inspiring force of the multitude, but this is less significantly the case in the political organisation of the State than, perhaps, in almost any other sphere of activity, far less so, for example, than in the matter of artistic creation. For all purposes of practical discussion Moses may be said to have given the Law upon the Mount, Brutus to have determined Cæsar's rule in Rome, the Tudor kings in person to have established the principle of founding a monarchic despotism in England upon a sense of public interests, Bacon and those in his counsel to have confirmed it, Coke, Harrington and Hobbes and those in theirs to have modified it, and Cromwell, with a small group of English gentlemen, to have overthrown it. And so it will be found generally in history that changes in government have been brought about by the shrewd and passionate devices of a few

minds. It may be true to say that custom precedes law, but it is not safe to go beyond this admission to the conclusion that law is the natural expression of the people's will. The law in a fortunate age may be the best that could be framed in the people's interest, but that is another matter. It also may be allowed that there are times when the mass emotion of the people assumes what seems to be direct control of the government machine by means of revolution. But while such revolution may leave its mark upon the future form of government, it rapidly loses the momentum by which it can retain direct control of the instrument itself. And Lincoln's ideal of "Government of the people, by the people, for the people," noble as it is, and heroically as he himself believed in it, is nevertheless but a splendid abstraction, very advantageously presented to the world, but, so far as political government is concerned, beyond exact realisation in practice. And this is so even in a State where there is universal franchise, and where the idea of representation is, on the whole, kept free from corruption. It is not merely visionary to hope at any time that government of the people may be for the people, but in practice

we cannot but perceive that it will be, not by the people, but by a few men of application, who may be rich or poor in wisdom. The nearest approach to government by the people will be found when these men are by their nature, and by the terms of the constitution, most readily susceptible to popular opinion. Whether such a condition of government is all to the good or not is a subject of endless debate. It has the clear advantage of making foolish and dangerous rulers easily turned out of office, while, on the other hand, in the wise rulers it may curb courage and imagination. However this may be, the fact remains that all forms of government are chiefly the creation of a few thinkers and rest in the hands of a few ministers, with or without a sovereign. And history tells us that when these thinkers and ministers have concluded that on the whole the social instinct of the individual citizen is bad, they have favoured an autocratic or tyrannic government as being the best for the community at large, when they have concluded that this instinct was good, they have aimed at a government founded on the principle of representation.

It is not to be supposed that these con-

victions in either direction are in themselves clearly definable as good or bad, as worthy or unworthy. No friendlier spirit or more disinterested intellect were ever engaged in political speculation than those of Thomas Hobbes. He could be vehement in controversy, but we can hardly withhold our affection from so perfect an excuse for kingly chivalry as he was at the Restoration, when Charles, on being asked to degrade him, went up instead to the old man in the street and raised his hat to him. And yet Hobbes in his political philosophy insists on the one purpose of government being to protect men from each other, all of them alike in greed, and all of them wholly untouched by any inspiration of mutual goodwill. His conception of primitive society was one in which all the members were standardised to the pattern of Reynard the Fox. "A little hound named Courtois," as the fable tells us, "complained to the king, how that in the cold winter, in the hard frost, he had been sore forewintered in suchwise as he had kept no more meat than a pudding, which pudding Reynard the Fox had taken away from him."

Hobbes is explicit on the matter.

"The finall Cause, End, or Designe of

men, (who naturally love Liberty, and Dominion over others,) in the introduction of that restraint upon themselves, (in which wee see them live in Commonwealths,) is the foresight of their own preservation, and of a more contented life thereby; that is to say, of getting themselves out from that miserable condition of Warre, which is necessarily consequent (as hath been shown) to the naturall Passions of men, when there is no visible Power to keep them in awe, and tye them by feare of punishment to the performance of their Covenants, and observation of those Lawes of Nature set down in the fourteenth and fifteenth Chapters.

“ For the Lawes of Nature (as *Justice, Equity, Modesty, Mercy*, and (in summe) *doing to others, as wee would be done to,*) of themselves, without the terrour of some Power, to cause them to be observed, are contrary to our naturall Passions, that carry us to Partiality, Pride, Revenge, and the like. And Covenants, without the Sword, are but Words, and of no strength to secure a man at all.

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“Nor is it enough for the security, which men desire should last all the time of their life, that they be governed, and directed by one judgment, for a limited time; as in one Battel, or one Warre. For though they obtain a Victory by their unanimous endeavour against a forraign enemy; yet afterwards, when either they have no common enemy, or he that by one part is held for an enemy, is by another part held for a friend, they must needs by the difference of their interests dissolve, and fall again into a Warre amongst themselves.

“The only way to erect such a Common Power, as may be able to defend them from the invasion of Forraigners, and the injuries of one another, and thereby to secure them in such sort, as that by their owne industrie, and by the fruites of the Earth, they may nourish themselves and live contentedly; is, to conferre all their power and strength upon one Man, or upon one Assembly of men, that they may reduce all their Wills, by plurality of voices, unto one Will: which is as much as to say, to

appoint one Man, or Assembly of men, to beare their Person; and every one to owne, and acknowledge himselfe to be Author of whatsoever he that so beareth their Person, shall Act, or cause to be Acted, in those things which concerne the Common Peace and Safetie; and therein to submit their Wills, and every one to his Will, and their Judgments, to his Judgment."

It necessarily followed, from this conception, that Hobbes's *Leviathan* (the symbolic figure of his State) should be devised for the particular purpose of making the Reynards behave tolerably to each other, that it should be, as Mr. G. P. Gooch puts it in his *Political Thought in England from Bacon to Halifax*, the policeman and not the instructor. The code by which the policeman is to work, as drawn up by Hobbes, is mostly wise and benevolent, but it seems to exonerate, it may almost be said even to exclude, the individual from any participation in the affairs of the State, beyond an unquestioning, and even, if needs be, blind obedience to statutes of the Government. To the influence of this condition in the State upon patriotic duty in the

citizen, we shall return shortly, but first we have to consider for a moment the kind of government that is evolved from an opposite conception of human nature. Here is Walt Whitman, that most eloquent voice of the new democracy that would scornfully repudiate Hobbes's poor opinion of man, though it might still accept much of his legislative theory.

“I hear America singing, the varied carols
I hear,

Those of mechanics, each one singing his
as it should be blithe and strong,

The carpenter singing his as he measures
his plank or beam,

The mason singing his as he makes ready
for work, or leaves off work,

The boatman singing what belongs to him
in his boat, the deck-hand singing on the
steamboat deck,

The shoemaker singing as he sits on his
bench, the hatter singing as he stands,

The wood-cutter's song, the ploughboy's on
his way in the morning, or at noon inter-
mission or at sundown,

The delicious singing of the mother, or of
the young wife at work, or of the girl
sewing or washing,

Each singing what belongs to him or her
and to none else. . . ."

But this pure individualism is not, it need not be said, the whole of Whitman's creed. No less certainly than Hobbes, he admits the figure of the State into his philosophy, but it is a figure of an altogether different bearing. In Hobbes, the individual submits to the State because he cannot otherwise trust himself, or be trusted, to behave with the elements of common decency. In Whitman, the individual accepts the State as an institution through which he can most gloriously express a large part of his abounding spiritual nature, the part that has steadily before it the idea of "Joy in widest communalty spread." The citizen must submit himself to government, says Hobbes, because "even when there is no common enemy, they make Warre upon each other, for their particular interests," and in support of this principle of absolute submission to the Government, he recalls the children of Israel saying to Moses, "Speak thou to us, and we will hear thee; but let not God speak to us lest we die." Then comes Whitman, in a mood that will have none of this.

“Still though the one I sing:

(One, yet of contradictions made,) I dedicate to Nationality,

I leave in him revolt, (O latent right of insurrection! O quenchless, indispensable fire!) ”

Here Whitman leaves to the individual subject a liberty of private judgment that would have been anathema to Hobbes.

Before attempting to correlate these conflicting views of the nature of government as they affect the private citizen's patriotic obligation, it may be well to repeat that virtue is not necessarily as entirely with Whitman against Hobbes as our own feelings of faith in the spirit of man might persuade us. On the whole we shall probably conclude that a belief in man's essential decency and good intention, even in his perfectibility, the idea of which was Shelley's philosophic passion, is a nobler and, on the whole, a more rational view than a conviction of his incurable treachery. But before arriving at this, the more hopeful position, we must have examined the less comfortable one with clear minds, and have rejected it for more conclusive reasons than those of merely amiable aspira-

tion. Original sin may be an unprofitable doctrine, but we cannot shout it out of court merely by fervour. Faith in man is only splendid when it is held in face of his manifest imperfections. Cupidity and cruelty are powerful elements in the life of every community, and we cannot establish our belief that on the whole they are safely controlled in the civic polity by worthier passions merely by pretending that they are not there. Shelley and Whitman and Wordsworth transcend the lucidly benevolent philosophy of Hobbes, because with the evidence as clearly before them as it was before him, they nevertheless cherish a faith which is none the less practical because it is rooted in mysticism, the mysticism that is familiar to the poets, but beyond the intellectual resources of Hobbes and his like. Hobbes would not accept Whitman because, for all his exact logical powers, powers be it noted by no means divorced from human feeling, he would fail altogether to follow the profounder logic of the poet and would charge it with being merely visionary. But this does not relieve the poet of his responsibility to follow Hobbes's pleading without prejudice, and to answer it to his own satisfaction at least be-

fore he dismisses it. And this answer can only be made by the poet if, in the patient study of his own experience of men, he is persuaded that, on the whole, human nature is governed more thoroughly by good influences than by bad.

Having considered the two distinct principles of government, and the philosophic ideas upon which they are founded, we are now left with the main problem of what should be the private citizen's relation to the State under government of either kind. In the theory of government advanced by Hobbes it might, it would seem, be argued that so long as the citizen obeys the laws his part in the contract is perfectly achieved. In doing this, it may be said, he performs all that is required of him in bringing about the common security which is the chief, if not the only, end of government, and in making so much of sacrifice he acquires the right of not troubling his mind any further with the State at all. This view has sometimes been held by wise and virtuous men. John Tillotson, Chaplain to Charles II, and afterwards Archbishop of Canterbury, wrote:

“ . . . it is certainly much easier of the two to obey a just and wise govern-

ment (I had almost said any government) than to govern justly and wisely.

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“The advantage which men have by a more devout and retired and contemplative life, is, that they are not distracted about many things; their minds and affections are set upon one thing; and the whole stream and force of their affections run one way. All their thoughts and endeavours are united in one great end and design, which makes their life all of a piece, and to be consistent with itself throughout.

“Nothing but necessity, or the hope of doing more good than a man is capable of doing in a private station (which a modest man will not easily presume concerning himself) can recompense the trouble and uneasiness of a more public and busy life.

“Besides that, many men, if they understand themselves right, are at the best in a lower and more private condition, and make a much more awkward figure in a higher and more public station.

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“And in my poor judgment the more retired and private condition is the better and safer, the more easy and innocent, and consequently the more desirable of the two. . . .”

a doctrine that Bolingbroke might have countered with his scornful reference to “That pack of Anchorites and Enthusiasts with whose names the Calendar is crowded and disgraced,” which Tillotson in turn could have met with his—

“Not that it is perfection to go out of the world, and to be perfectly useless. Our Lord by his own example has taught us, that we can never serve God better than when doing good to men; and that a perpetual retirement from the world, and shunning the conversation of men, is not the most religious life; but living amongst men, and doing good to them.”

with which concession Bolingbroke might have been pacified. Tillotson’s qualification, however, does not provide for any contact as expressed in government, between the citizen and the State, beyond obedience to the law, but only for private charity of life. Indeed

he proposes, or at least suggests, in the passage quoted, a retirement from public contacts in which there is no place for patriotic inspiration beyond a dutiful conformity. And, as has been remarked, Tillotson's view is one which, especially with *Leviathan* in power, has a good deal in common sense to support it. If the function of the State is correction only, then it may not be easy to see what duty we can have to the State, how it can waken any spirit of service in us, once we have taken steps to avoid the correction or submitted to it when necessary. And, beyond this, it may be said that the view does not become wholly untenable even when the State has the far more gracious and inspiring character of Whitman's vision. If the embodiment of a common will in a central figure of government is designed for the purpose of giving that common will its amplest means of virtuous expression, then, by the bare facts of the argument, government is an instrument of general convenience, and admirable as such, but not an institution to claim affection and homage. And so, in looking for the spiritual element that challenges Tillotson's position, and makes patriotic duty in the citizen a positive virtue in the life of the world,

we shall find that this element is necessary to make the relation between the citizen and the State complete, not only when government is of the kind that Hobbes thought necessary, but also when it is of the kind that Whitman desired.

The difficulty that will obscure this spiritual element of which we speak from the vision of many people, lies in the not uncommon belief that while defects in human character, with their consequent catastrophe, are a vivid reality in life, easily perceived and exactly significant, disinterested virtue, with its consequent enthusiasms, is a bright but nebulous abstraction, without definition and not significant in any precise way at all. The spectacle, for example, of a seedy and petulant figure of human depravity will be applauded in our theatres from the stalls of the higher criticism as a piece of dauntless realism, while the figure of a merely good man will be voted dull or visionary, the worn and rather nonsensical argument about Satan being the hero of *Paradise Lost* flickering somewhere in the critical mind. But the house at large is unswayed by these sophistications, and Prospero and Candida, persons who pursue a consistently virtuous course to the serene

close of their stories, are to many people as dramatic presentations as Claudius and Mrs. Tanqueray, who pursue other courses to other ends. Vice, tragic failure of character, squalor of emotion, these are themes dramatic enough, given the dramatist; but so also are virtue, achievement, purity of heart.

This is not, as it might seem, to digress, but to advance a point that bears directly upon our argument. Nothing is more futile in the world of ideas and of action than the mind that is always improvising empirical judgments about life from its own casual and unorganised experience, without any foundations of learning or any standards drawn from literature and history. The man who plumes himself upon his practical knowledge of the world, and tells you that he chooses to inform himself from life and not from books, is generally the most ignorant member of the community, and the most incapable of conducting any ordinary transaction with equity and foresight. At the same time, with the scholar, by which we mean not the pedant but the man who has laboured to govern his conduct of life by all that learning together with experience can teach, there is also the danger of his being a little overawed by his knowledge, a little

cramped by precedent. And it is well for him often to remind himself that his learning is after all but a preparation of the mind, and that the proper function of that mind remains the understanding of his own experience of the world. The mind that is not so prepared will flounder through life, noisily and insignificantly. But the mind that is so prepared must beware of being lulled into a delusion that it has not to pass through life at all. The perfect balance of learning and experience is the ideal condition of every mind, and it is as dangerous to neglect the one as the other. Failure in either direction, in learning or in experience, is likely to infect the mind with a habit either cynical or sentimental, both of them destructive of clear moral judgment. Since cynicism and sentimentality are words very often used and not often defined, it may be worth while to consider exactly what they mean. This may help towards accounting for common misconceptions of the citizen's patriotic duty, and towards leaving us more clearly in view of its true nature.

Cynicism is founded upon a man's assumed or real mistrust of the motives of his fellow-beings. The question is, how does this mistrust arise? In a competitive society,

the only society that we know, there is unquestionably a large share of self-interest in the motives governing the actions of every man. The sense of insecurity, which in some form or another comes to all, is continually making its assaults upon character. Designs made by one man upon the fortune and interests of another are common enough, and Hobbes was so far right. But these designs are not inspired by merely wanton wickedness, but by a fear that, though it may be shameful in its consequences, is not culpable in itself. It is not quite fair to the cynic to say that he makes his disparaging inferences about mankind in general from a knowledge of his own imperfections. Men, even the best of them, do dissemble, they do assume a virtue where they have it not, they do fail in loyalties, they do wilfully make the worse appear the better reason, and so the cynic is not without plain evidence in support of his unhappy conclusions. But the cynic's view of life is a false one, because he persuades himself that these defects of character are deliberately formed and cherished, and fails to see that they are common misfortunes against which the spirit of man is persistently offering a heroic resistance. The cynic, in fact, once

he is confirmed in the habit of his mind, steadily confuses defects of character with character itself, as though to be blind of an eye were to be corrupt in your five wits, and he will probably end up by being convinced that if you thank him you are asking for something, or that if you question the civilising influence of the cat-o'-nine-tails, it is because you cherish secret designs as a garrotter. The evidence of good and bad in human nature, whether or not it is equally distributed, is at least readily to be found in either kind. Cynicism is a preference, partly natural and partly cultivated, for the evidence of bad. It is clearly a very uncomfortable view of life, and as clearly it is a very imperfect one.

The easy definition of the sentimentalist in antithesis to the cynic would be to say that his acceptance of the evidence of good in human nature is secure against the evidence of bad, but this implies an evangelical faith of which the sentimentalist knows nothing. The inspiration of his life is a desire to avoid difficulty. He has no faith in the redemption of man, he merely recoils from the disturbing conditions of mind and estate from which man has to be redeemed. He avoids unpleasant aspects of life and character as he

would avoid unpleasant smells. He has no sublime faith in the goodness of man. He merely begs that man in his less amiable moods will keep himself to himself. He is thus the complement of the cynic, not in preferring the evidence of good to the evidence of bad, since it is not for him to weigh evidence at all, but in setting a weakly agreeable conception of life against a weakly disillusioned one. He is a less honest fellow than the cynic, because the cynic in some sense has convictions, though they are perverted ones, while the sentimentalist cannot be said to have convictions at all. The one contemplates life through a disordered mind, but the other shrinks from contemplation of any kind. The cynic's governing passion is to dislike his fellows; the sentimentalist's governing passion is to like himself.

Both alike are evil counsellors in the world, confusing all moral issues. So far as the affairs of society are under their control, they are governed by alternations of jailerism and moral pauperisation. The cynic in his heart thinks nobody would be the worse of a flogging, while the sentimentalist would, by your leave, rather not talk about these things. They are equally cruel in their influences,

and, as it happens, their cruelty often converges to a common point. A cynic, as often as not, is merely a sentimentalist scared. In short, Hobbes's conception of *Leviathan* is well enough, so long as it is subject to philosophic discipline; remove that and you have the cynic, who forthwith administers government in a way that breeds the sentimentalist on every hand.

And the world can be saved from these demoralising agencies only by the men of just faith. This faith has nothing to do with the nebulous transcendentalism of people who suppose that they can cheat the terrors of life by pretending that they do not exist. It is the informing virtue of him who, facing all the evidence and sifting it with historical insight and perfect candour of soul, concludes that man, beset and ensnared in the struggle as he may be, is nevertheless purging himself through the fires of experience with a steadfastness that nothing can overcome. The man of just faith is sensible of all the sin, all the treachery, all the cupidity, in mankind, but he is unshaken by these in his sense of the superb courage with which mankind toils through them, with suffering and the certainty of death always upon him, to some ultimate

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virtue of which there is nothing more precise for consolation than the clouded vision of some

“far-off divine event
To which the whole creation moves.”

This it is that is the reward of just faith: an ever-growing reverence for man's courage. If man were wholly good, or desperate in corruption, or if he were assured of the goal, however hard the probation might be, towards which he was moving, there would be no question of courage. It is because man is weak and anxious, insecure in his tribulations, and never reconciled to his own failures, that his courage becomes the greatest glory on earth. The cynic may observe that man goes on because he cannot help it. It is true, he cannot; but the man of just faith knows above the cynic's understanding that man splendidly would not help it if he could.

We return, then, to that spiritual element that accounts for the sense in the citizen of a patriotic duty to the State, above the argument of expediency that once the orders of the State are obeyed obligation ceases. And we find that a justly constituted mind first rejects entirely the idea of the State being

an institution designed merely for the purpose of keeping men from each other's throats. We find, further, that the idea of the State being a convenient figure through which the individual can most satisfactorily express his social good-will is not sufficient to such a mind. This is a function of the State, but it is not the whole function. For such a mind the State becomes, above all its practical dispensations, however virtuous they may be, an ideal reality upon which it can lavish all its instinct for undesigning loyalty. The citizen in this mood asks nothing of the State, and desires to give nothing. He merely wishes to exercise his faculty of loyalty for its own delighted sake. It is a mood apart from public service, or the bearing of arms. It is the image in Western civilisations of the mystical rapture of the Buddhist in contemplation. The true citizen will speak for his country, spend for it, labour for it, die for it. But there are times when he is greater than in any of these moods of service, times when he knows only that he loves his country:

“What have I done for you,
England, my England?
What is there I would not do,
England, my own?”

Henley is not here really proposing to himself any sacrifice, any enlargement of his country's fortune, spiritual or material; he is stirred suddenly by this sense of love, that is all. Of this exaltation the cynic and the sentimentalist know nothing. It is possible only to faith, faith founded, as we have seen, on learning and experience truly fulfilling each other.

The love of country may have many occasions, and it cannot be said that one is ampler than another. This mood of unconditional ardour, asking and offering nothing, is neither more nor less worthy than the moods of service and sacrifice; it is different. It is not heroic with the delight of oppression survived and overthrown, as Milton elaborates it.

“ Oh how comely it is and how reviving
 To the Spirits of just men long opprest!
 When God into the hands of thir deliverer
 Puts invincible might
 To quell the mighty of the Earth, th'
 oppressour,
 The brute and boist'rous force of violent
 men
 Hardy and industrious to support
 Tyrannic power, but raging to pursue

The righteous and all such as honour
Truth;

He all thir Ammunition
And feats of War defeats
With plain Heroic magnitude of mind
And celestial vigour arm'd,
Thir Armories and Magazins contemns,
Renders them useless, while
With winged expedition
Swift as the lightning glance he executes
His errand on the wicked, who surpris'd
Lose thir defence distracted and amaz'd."

Nor is it tragic with the music of despairing
wrath, as:

"By the rivers of Babylon, there we
sat down, yea, we wept, when we re-
membered Zion.

We hanged our harps upon the willows
in the midst thereof.

For there they that carried us away
captive required of us a song; and they
that wasted us required of us mirth,
saying, Sing us one of the songs of Zion.

How shall we sing the Lord's song in a
strange land?

If I forget thee, O Jerusalem, let my
right hand forget her cunning.

If I do not remember thee, let my tongue cleave to the roof of my mouth; if I prefer not Jerusalem above my chief joy.

Remember, O Lord, the children of Edom in the day of Jerusalem; who said, Rase it, rase it, even to the foundation thereof.

O daughter of Babylon, who art to be destroyed; happy shall he be, that rewardeth thee as thou hast served us.

Happy shall he be, that taketh and dasheth thy little ones against the stones."

nor, again, tragic with Hecuba's nobler defiance at the burning of Troy:

"Ah, me! and is it come, the end of all,
The very crest and summit of my days?
I go forth from my land, and all its ways
Are filled with fire! Bear me, O aged feet,
A little nearer: I must gaze, and greet
My poor town ere she fall.

Farewell, farewell!

O thou whose breath was mighty on the swell
Of orient winds, my Troy! Even thy name
Shall soon be taken from thee. Lo, the
flame

Hath thee, and we, thy children, pass away
To slavery. . . . God! O God of mercy!

. . . Nay:

Why call I on the Gods? They know, they
know,

My prayers, and would not hear them long
ago."

"Times of heroism," says Emerson, "are generally times of terror, but the day never shines in which this element may not work." And there is no time or calling in which this pure emotion of patriotic love may not possess a man. The opportunity for speaking his faith or laying down his life for his country may never be his; he may live in obscurity, pursuing some unheroic course of industry, intent it may seem only on making ends meet. And yet the visitation comes. He is aware sometimes no longer of his difficult estate, his undistinguished part; he knows only that he shares one right, one mysterious opportunity, with all his countrymen. For a moment the enthusiasm of disinterested love is upon him, and although it will fade again into the glooms of expediency, he does at these intervals look on truth, and is transfigured. He is delineated finely, in his trepidations, and in his "unconquerable mind," by Emerson:

“We live in a very low state of the world, and pay unwilling tribute to governments founded on force. There is not, among the most religious and instructed men of the most religious and civil nations, a reliance on the moral sentiment, and a sufficient belief in the unity of things to persuade them that society can be maintained without artificial restraints, as well as the solar system; or that the private citizen might be reasonable, and a good neighbour, without the hint of a jail or a confiscation. What is strange too, there never was in any man sufficient faith in the power of rectitude to inspire him with the broad design of renovating the State on the principle of right and love. All those who have pretended this design, have been partial reformers, and have admitted in some manner the supremacy of the bad State. I do not call to mind a single human being who has steadily denied the authority of the laws, on the simple ground of his own moral nature. Such designs, full of genius and full of fate as they are, are not entertained except avowedly as air-pictures. If the indi-

vidual who exhibits them, dare to think them practicable, he disgusts scholars and churchmen; and men of talent, and women of superior sentiments, cannot hide their contempt. Not the less does nature continue to fill the heart of youth with suggestions of this enthusiasm, and there are now men,—if indeed I can speak in the plural number,—more exactly, I will say, I have just been conversing with one man, to whom no weight of adverse experience will make it for a moment appear impossible that thousands of human beings might exercise towards each other the grandest and simplest sentiments, as well as a knot of friends, or a pair of lovers.”

And the citizen in his moments of faith makes no bargain in his mind with the State, he is exalted only in his love for “this dear, dear land.” The old man, dying, has nothing to hope from his country, nothing to offer it; but into John of Gaunt’s radiant apostrophe of England Shakespeare pours the very ecstasy of this mood of ideal patriotism:

“This royal throne of kings, this sceptr’d isle,
This earth of majesty, this seat of Mars,

This other Eden, demi-paradise;
This fortress built by Nature for herself
Against infection and the hand of war;
This happy breed of men, this little world,
This precious stone set in the silver sea,
Which serves it in the office of a wall,
Or as a moat defensive to a house,
Against the envy of less happier lands;
This blessed plot, this earth, this realm,
 this England,
This nurse, this teeming womb of royal
 kings,
Fear'd by their breed and famous by their
 birth,
Renowned for their deeds as far from home,
For Christian service and true chivalry,
As is the sepulchre in stubborn Jewry
Of the world's ransom, blessed Mary's Son;
This land of such dear souls, this dear dear
 land,
Dear for her reputation through the
 world. . . ."

CHAPTER IV

PATRIOTISM OF PLACE

“BREATHES there a man, with soul so dead,
Who never to himself hath said,
This is my own, my native land.”

Scott's familiar lines may serve us at the opening of what should, rightly presented, be an idyll in the story of patriotism. Love of country, expressing itself nobly, as we have seen, in service, in supreme sacrifice, or in mystical devotion, is yet perhaps in nothing so intimate and tender as in the passion the patriot feels for the very earth of his familiar habit. Good counsel, vindication by the word, the offer of his life in defence, even that raptur spiritual mood, these are all in some sense known in a man for public virtue, but this other love of his for a natural scene against which his life is set, is, as it were, the inner domestic bliss of patriotism. It is, it may be said, from this affection that all the other patriotic virtues spring. A man cannot

cherish any profound national sentiment upon whose character there is not some abiding influence of place. This man may extend his affections through life from one familiar landscape to another, while that one from first to last may keep always no more than an acre or two advanced beyond all others in his heart. But the one loyalty is as far removed as the other from mere traveller's joy. In either case the virtue is in the long acquaintance with a landscape in all its moods, the forming of associations, the tranquil and unfailing sense of home. And if a man, knowing nothing of this emotion, can never learn the more deliberate parts of national patriotism, still less can he learn as the citizen of a State to think justly of the citizens of others. It is sometimes supposed that the ideal of world brotherhood, so commendable and in these days so well commended, should expose an ardent national sense as an obstacle in the way of good-will among mankind. No political belief could be more erroneous or more dangerous. The only hope of a world of men respecting each other's claims and privileges lies in an ever-growing ardour of the individual citizen for his own home-land. The ardour must not be blind or bigoted, when, indeed,

it is no ardour at all. It must increase always in understanding of itself, delightedly aware of the joy, the gentle daily comfort, that it inspires. Then, and then only, can he realise the same devotion in his fellowmen, and respect it. In a literal sense, the man who most intelligently loves the corner of earth that is his own, is on the best way to becoming a useful citizen of the world. I have elsewhere tried to put this idea into shape, and I hope I may be forgiven for repeating my words here:

Scarce is my life more dear to me,
Brief tutor of oblivion,
Than fields below the rookery
That comfortably looks upon
The little street of Piddington.

I never think of Avon's meadows.
Ryton woods or Rydal mere,
Or moon-tide moulding Cotswold shadows,
But I know that half the fear
Of death's indifference is here.

I love my land. No heart can know
The patriot's mystery, until
It aches as mine for woods ablow
In Gloucestershire with daffodil,
Or Bicester brakes that violets fill.

No man can tell what passion surges
For the house of his nativity
In the patriot's blood, until he purges
His grosser mood of jealousy,
And comes to meditate with me.

Of gifts of earth that stamp his brain
As mine the pools of Ludlow mill,
The hazels fencing Trilly's Lane,
And Forty Acres under Brill.
The ferry under Elsfield hill.

These are what England is to me,
Not empire, nor the name of her
Ranging from pole to tropic sea.
These are the soil in which I bear
All that I have of character.

That men my fellows near and far
May live in like communion,
Is all I pray; all pastures are
The best beloved beneath the sun;
I have my own; I envy none.

It is in these two aspects of patriotism, I mean this one of the love of place, and that other one of a mystical devotion, that we are reminded most pointedly that while government is a necessary part of the State, governments in themselves have less influence upon

the citizen's life, and upon his essential patriotism, than might be supposed from the conversation of people who seem to think, for example, to quote myself once again and have done with it, that "the British Empire lives at Westminster."

This love of place, it may be remarked, is in its designs as various as the characters of men. Most commonly we shall find it lavished upon beauties of landscape, the secluded peace and healing influences that found their supreme celebration in the poetry of Wordsworth. But this will not always be so, as no one can more fittingly tell us than Samuel Johnson, whose "love of a London life was so strong that he would have thought himself an exile in any other place, particularly residing in the country." No peace and seclusion were his ambitions, but the town, the largest possible town. Here is Boswell, admirably provoking as always:

"Talking of London life, he said, 'The happiness of London is not to be conceived but by those who have been in it. I will venture to say, there is more learning and science within the circumference of ten miles from where we now sit, than in all the rest of the kingdom.' BOSWELL.

‘The only disadvantage is the great distance at which people live from one another.’ JOHNSON. ‘Yes, Sir; but that is occasioned by the largeness of it, which is the cause of all the other advantages.’ BOSWELL. ‘Sometimes I have been in the humour of wishing to retire to a desert.’ JOHNSON. ‘Sir, you have desert enough in Scotland.’”

And on another occasion Johnson exclaims:

“Why, Sir, you find no man, at all intellectual, who is willing to leave London. No, Sir, when a man is tired of London, he is tired of life; for there is in London all that life can afford. . . . A country gentleman should bring his lady to visit London as soon as he can, that they may have agreeable topics for conversation when they are by themselves.”

which recalls the occasion, when on reading an Epitaph in the *Spectator*:

“Born in New England, did in London die,” he remarked: “I do not wonder at this. It would have been strange if born in London he had died in New England.” It was all very well for the great Londoner, in the fervours of

poetical composition and under the influence of Juvenal, to write this in his *London: A Poem*:

“Could’st thou resign the Park and Play
content,
For the fair Banks of *Severn* or of *Trent*;
There might’st thou find some elegant
Retreat,
Some hireling Senator’s deserted Seat;
And stretch thy Prospects o’er the smiling
Land,
For less than rent the Dungeons of the
Strand;
There prune thy Walks, support thy droop-
ing Flow’rs,
Direct thy Rivulets, and twine thy Bow’rs;
And, while thy Beds a cheap Repast afford,
Despise the Dainties of a venal Lord:
There ev’ry Bush with Nature’s Music
rings,
There ev’ry Breeze bears Health upon its
Wings;
On all thy Hours Security shall smile,
And bless thine Evening Walk and Morning
Toil.”

His heart was never in such verses as it was in London itself. “The town is my element;

there are my friends, there are my books, to which I have not yet bid farewell, and there are my other amusements." So he wrote at the age of seventy-five, in the year of his death. And to London he returned from Lichfield to die. Nor was it only his friends and books and amusements that Johnson found in London. No sylvan scene has ever crept more securely into the heart of a poet and patriot than did the Courts and Alleys of Fleet Street cast an abiding enchantment upon Johnson. A sturdier patriot never lived than he, and no man's patriotism has ever been founded more romantically upon love of place; and Johnson's place was London.

In immediate contrast to Johnson's metropolitan fancy is the theme of a little house and a quiet life, common in all ages of literature, and of poetry especially. Sometimes it may be suspected that the poet's is but a conventional shepherding, sung from the strongholds of urban elegance, as in Pope's none the less satisfying pastoral:

"Happy the man, whose wish and care
 A few paternal acres bound,
 Content to breathe his native air
 In his own ground.

“Whose herds with milk, whose fields with
bread,

Whose flocks supply him with attire;
Whose trees in summer yield him shade,
In winter, fire.

“Blest, who can unconcern’dly find
Hours, days, and years slide soft away
In health of body, peace of mind,
Quiet by day.

“Sound sleep by night; study and ease
Together mix’d; sweet recreation,
And innocence, which most does please
With meditation.

“Thus let me live, unseen, unknown;
Thus unlamented let me die;
Steal from the world, and not a stone
Tell where I lie.”

by which may be set the equally laudable
Wish of Samuel Rogers, who, we remember,
was a wealthy banker as well as a poet.

“Mine be a cot beside the hill;
A bee-hive’s hum shall soothe my ear;
A willowy brook, that turns a mill,
With many a fall shall linger near.

“The swallow, oft, beneath my thatch
Shall twitter from her clay-built nest;

Oft shall the pilgrim lift the latch,
And share my meal, a welcome guest.

“Around my ivied porch shall spring
Each fragrant flower that drinks the dew;
And Lucy, at her wheel, shall sing
In russet-gown and apron blue.

“The village-church, among the trees,
Where first our marriage vows were given,
With merry peals shall swell the breeze,
And point with taper spire to heaven.”

From the Horatian manner we may turn
to Horace himself, given here in Connington's
translation:

“What blessing shall the bard entreat
The god he hallows, as he pours
The winecup? Not the mounds of wheat
That load Sardinian threshing floors;
Not Indian gold or ivory—no,
Nor flocks that o'er Calabria stray,
Nor fields that Liris, still and slow,
Is eating, unperceived, away.
Let those whose fate allows them train
Calenum's vine; let trader bold
From golden cups rich liquor drain
From wares of Syria bought and sold,

Heaven's favourite, sooth, for thrice a-year
 He comes and goes across the brine
 Undamaged. I in plenty here
 On endives, mallows, succory dine.
 O grant me, Phœbus, calm content,
 Strength unimpair'd, a mind entire,
 Old age without dishonour spent,
 Nor unbefriended by the lyre!"

A few lines from William Browne, the poet of "Britannia's Pastorals," touch for us a deeper strain than these rural felicities, though the pastoral note is still here:

"Hail thou, my native soil! thou blessed
 plot
 Whose equal all the world affordeth not!
 Show me who can so many crystal rills,
 Such sweet-clothed vallies, or aspiring hills,
 Such wood-ground, pastures, quarries,
 wealthy mines,
 Such rocks in whom the diamond fairly
 shines:
 And if the earth can shew the like again,
 Yet will she fail in her sea-ruling men.
 Time never can produce men to o'ertake
 The fames of Grenville, Davies, Gilbert,
 Drake,
 Or worthy Hawkins, or of thousands more,

That by their power made the Devonian
 shore
 Mock the proud Tagus; for whose richest
 spoil
 The boasting Spaniard left the Indian soil
 Bankrupt of store, knowing it would quit
 cost
 By winning this, though all the rest were
 lost."

And so we come to the moods when poetry
 approaches the same theme with the true
 imaginative passion, to Wordsworth speaking
 of himself:

"Adieu, Rydalian Laurels! that have grown
 And spread as if ye knew that days might
 come
 When ye would shelter in a happy home,
 On this fair Mount, a Poet of your own,
 One who ne'er ventured for a Delphic
 crown
 To sue the God; but, haunting your green
 shade
 All seasons through, is humbly pleased to
 braid /
 Ground-flowers, beneath your guardianship,
 self-sown."

and the same poet speaking of his shepherd, Michael:

“ . . . he had been alone
Amid the heart of many thousand mists,
That came to him, and left him, on the
heights.

So lived he till his eightieth year was past.
And grossly that man errs, who should suppose
That the green valleys, and the streams and
rocks,

Were things indifferent to the Shepherd's
thoughts.

Fields, where with cheerful spirits he had
breathed

The common air; hills, which with vigorous
step

He had so often climbed; which had impressed
So many incidents upon his mind

Of hardship, skill or courage, joy or fear;

Which, like a book, preserved the memory

Of the dumb animals, whom he had saved,

Had fed or sheltered, linking to such acts

The certainty of honourable gain:

Those fields, those hills—what could they
less?—had laid

Strong hold on his affections, were to him

A pleasurable feeling of blind love,

The pleasure which there is in life itself.”

Not less impressive in a like mood than Wordsworth himself is Emerson, a poet full of surprises when we are apt to forget that he was a poet at all, as in:

“I am going to my own hearth-stone,
 Bosomed in yon green hills alone,—
 A secret nook in a pleasant land,
 Whose groves the frolic fairies planned;
 Where arches green, the livelong day,
 Echo the blackbird’s roundelay,
 And vulgar feet have never trod
 A spot that is sacred to thought and God.

“O, when I am safe in my sylvan home,
 I tread on the pride of Greece and Rome;
 And when I am stretched beneath the pines,
 Where the evening star so holy shines,
 I laugh at the lore and the pride of man,
 At the sophist schools and the learned clan;
 For what are they all, in their high conceit,
 When man in the bush with God may meet?”

and, again, in:

“If I could put my woods in song
 And tell what’s there enjoyed,
 All men would to my gardens throng,
 And leave the cities void.”

Examples could be multiplied, and pleasantly

enough. Above particular instances, however, there is in nearly all the poets an under-current of emotion that has its source in this love of place. The landscape of Burns, of Arnold, of Chaucer, indeed of any of them, is never merely pleasant decoration, it is an abiding presence that is always deeply influencing the character of their poetry. "The banks and braes o' bonnie Doon" are an essential part of the sentiment of:

"O Scotia! my dear, my native soil!

For whom my warmest wish to Heaven
is sent,

Long may thy hardy sons of rustic toil

Be blest with health, and peace, and sweet
content.

And O! may Heaven their simple lives
prevent

From luxury's contagion, weak and vile!

Then, howe'er crowns and coronets be
rent,

A virtuous populace may rise the while,

And stand a wall of fire around their much-
lov'd isle."

And the very passion of Arnold's philosophy—a passion that unaccountably escapes most of his critics—breathes through the images of:

“Thee, at the ferry, Oxford riders blithe
 Returning home on summer nights, have
 met
 Crossing the stripling Thames at Bab-lock-
 hithe.”

and

“In Autumn, on the skirts of Bagley Wood,
 Where most the Gipsies by the turf-edged
 way
 Pitch their smok’d tents . . .”

and

“Have I not pass’d thee on the wooden
 bridge
 Wrapt in thy cloak and battling with the
 snow,
 Thy face towards Hinksey and its wintry
 ridge.”

Such things very far transcend mere descriptive verse. William Cory (Ionicus) once said, “Except now and then in a dream, thinking is not possible for any length of time without words.” This is a truth that much loose talk about æsthetics overlooks. When people say that they could say a lot if they could find the words, they mean really that they have nothing to say—nothing, literally that is, that is clearly enough defined in their

minds to take on the intelligible shape of words. It may be doubted whether in human experience an idea ever becomes complete until it has found words in which to embody itself, and not to realise this is generally to indulge a peculiarly idle form of intellectual self-deceit. It is the essential life that is in the word, not above it nor under it nor in some vague relation to it, but actually in it, that makes poetry the supremely important thing it is in the life of man. And, inversely, it is this function of words in bringing ideas to fruition that accounts for the fact that the one universally dull and unprofitable method of writing is the merely descriptive method, when the description neither suggests nor enforces an idea. For the word cannot compete with the natural image merely as such, and wise writers know better than to try to make it do so. To describe an April orchard to me is one thing, but to tell me something about an April orchard, using natural images to this end, is altogether another. The thing in itself, unrelated to an idea, I can realise with my own eyes far more completely than from anyone's description of it, but the poet may use it to open unknown worlds of understanding to me. So it is with Arnold and

those others in the landscape of their poetry. They use it never for its own external appearance. That they can enjoy in other moods with the eye. But in the mood of creation they use it for revelation, for imaging forth their thought in concrete significance, and in choosing for their purposes, as they commonly will, landscape with which they are familiar, they do so because they are there most accustomed to the tones and undertones of Nature's utterance. The patriotism of place, as we find it in Arnold and Wordsworth and Emerson for example is heedless of mere descriptive devices, being profoundly spiritual.

Sometimes a poet, without attempting the philosophic revelation of a Wordsworth, achieves a reality of his own by a simplicity that has nothing to do with the charming urbanities of amateur shepherds. Such a poet is John Clare, the Northamptonshire peasant, who, after an immediate popularity, when he was publishing in 1820 or so, followed by the usual reaction, has been slowly establishing his claim to a place in English poetry ever since, helped, it is pleasant to observe, by the generous advocacy of two later poets, Mr. Arthur Symonds and Mr. Edmund Blunden. Clare was unhappy in his life (though

Mr. Blunden discriminates delicately about this), desperately poor, often ill physically and mentally, and the asylum in which he spent his last years was in a rare sense a refuge. The distractions of poverty and the caprices of literary patronage left Clare with little inducement to trouble himself with the surge of national affairs, and of public patriotism there is hardly a trace in his verse. When he does look beyond his Northamptonshire fields to the figures of the great world, it is with no very encouraging result—as in these lines, where the object of his eulogy happens to be no nearer home than Napoleon:

“The heroes of the present and the past

Were puny, vague, and nothingness to thee:

Thou did'st a span grasp mighty to the last,
And strain for glory when thy die was cast.”

But the more intimate virtue of patriotism, with which we are at the moment concerned, possessed Clare's life with an ardour and fertilising power that it rarely exercises even on poets. Clare may not have loved England, may hardly have consciously been aware of this land “dear for her reputation through the world,” but he loved a few English fields

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with a devotion and knowledge that have perhaps never been excelled, and his poetry is in a very lovely way steeped in patriotic emotion. With him, for once in a way, description may be said to have become an office of inspiration. He did not use natural beauty, as Wordsworth did, as an image through which to project "the vision and the faculty divine"; nor, on the other hand, had he anything of the cold virtuosity that, holding itself aloof from passion, aims at the mere presentation of a natural image for its own sake. Clare did present images, and he did refrain from informing them with any conscious philosophic life. His poetry is, in fact, descriptive, but it differs from what we usually think of (and discuss) as descriptive poetry in the minute intensity with which he realises his object. The truth is that his very gift of precise and subtle delineation is itself passion, and that the shining veracity of his "freckled cowslips" and his hedger "chopping the pattering bushes hung with dew," and his "mouse with far-fetched ear" is the token of an emotion that is as authentic, and in its sources as philosophic as Wordsworth's own. Clare is as good an example as could be found of the patriot poet whose love of place in

lavishing itself on natural objects does not seek for truth beyond them nor draw from them any conscious impulse to larger loyalties, and yet, in its glowing intensity, invests them with a significance altogether beyond the reach of mere description. In such poetry as Clare's a may-bush is neither a symbol nor a connoisseur's fancy; it is a may-bush, isolated, unidea'd if you will, but it is suddenly before us thrilling with a wholly sufficient life of its own, and through it Clare can satisfy all his aspirations towards any kingdom of the earth, even towards the kingdom of God. Clare once volunteered to fight against the French, in defence of Northampton it would seem, and, as he prettily tells us, got a bounty of two guineas instead of waiting to be drawn for nothing. He was probably never so little a patriot as when he was marshalled with the thirteen hundred, than whom "a more motley multitude of lawless fellows was never seen in Oundle before—and hardly out of it." He did not defend Northampton, but he transfigured a corner of Northamptonshire with a patriotic zeal that truly served England in a way that would no doubt have seemed very obscure to the Prince Regent who called for the volunteers. This was the manner of Clare's devotion:

"The rosy day was sweet and young,
 The clod-brown lark that hail'd the morn
 Had just her summer anthem sung,
 And trembling dropped in the corn;
 The dew-rais'd flower was perk and proud,
 The butterfly around it play'd;
 The sky's blue clear, save woolly cloud
 That pass'd the sun without a shade.

"While cows restless from the ground
 Plung'd into the stream and drank,
 And the rings went whirling round,
 Till they touch'd the flaggy bank,
 On the arch's wall I knelt,
 Curious, as I often did,
 To see the words the sculpture spelt,
 But the moss its letters hid.

"In the wood's deep shade did stand,
 As I pass'd, the sticking-troop;
 And Goody begg'd a helping hand
 To heave her rotten faggot up:
 The riding-gate, sharp jerking round,
 Follow'd fast my heels again,
 While echo mock'd the clapping sound,
 And 'clap, clap,' sang the woods amain.

"The wood is sweet—I love it well,
 In spending there my leisure hours,

To seek the snail its painted shell,
And look about for curious flowers;
Or 'neath the hazel's leafy thatch,
On a stulp or mossy ground,
Little squirrel's gambols watch,
Dancing oak trees round and round.

.
“And while I clomb the hill,
Many a distant charm I found;
Pausing on the lagging mill,
That scarcely mov'd its sails around;
Hanging o'er a gate or stile,
Till my curious eye did tire,
Leisure was employ'd awhile,
Counting many a peeping spire.

.
“Some went searching by the wood,
Peeping 'neath the weaving thorn,
Where the pouch-lipp'd cuckoo-bud
From its snug retreat was torn;
Where the ragged-robin stood
With its pip'd stem streak'd with jet;
And the crow-flowers, golden hued,
Careless plenty easier met. . . .”

The curious may find a charming example of Clare's loving particularity in contrasting three poems published in his *Rural Muse*. They describe respectively the nests of the

nightingale, the pettichap (the long-tailed tit) and the yellow-hammer, and in graphic exactness of description Clare in terms of poetry easily outdoes the most scientific ornithologist. Bird's-nesting with Clare for guide is indeed rewarded with discovery. As a last illustration of his variation on the patriotic theme may be given his verses written "After reading in a letter Proposals for Building a Cottage," so like Pope and Rogers in thought, and so distinct in spirit:

"Beside a runnel build my shed,
 With stubbles cover'd o'er;
 Let broad oaks o'er its chimney spread,
 And grass-plats grace the door.

"The door may open with a string,
 So that it closes tight;
 And locks would be a wanted thing,
 To keep out thieves at night.

"A little garden, not too fine,
 Inclose with painted pales;
 And woodbines, round the cot to twine,
 Pin to the wall with nails.

"Let hazels grow, and spindling sedge,
 Bent bowering over-head;
 Dig old man's beard from woodland hedge,
 To twine a summer shade.

“Beside the threshold sods provide,
And build a summer seat;
Plant sweet-briar bushes by its side,
And flowers that blossom sweet.

“I love the sparrow’s ways to watch
Upon the cotter’s sheds,
So here and there pull out the thatch,
That they may hide their heads.

“And as the sweeping swallows stop
Their flights along the green,
Leave holes within the chimney-top
To paste their nest between.

“Stick shelves and cupboards round the hut,
In all the holes and nooks;
Nor in the corner fail to put
A cupboard for the books.

“Along the floor some sand I’ll sift,
To make it fit to live in;
And then I’ll thank ye for the gift,
As something worth the giving.”

There is yet another aspect of the patriotism of place to be found in literature. Nature in those poems by Pope and Rogers is used rather as a conventional figure by which the poet can by contrast relieve a mood of restless tedium or exhaustion. The rural

scene imagined is fairly enough regarded as an object of the poet's affection, but it is not an intimacy of the soul in the sense that his Helpstone meadows are for Clare. Pope and Rogers, to put it plainly, suddenly felt that it would be pleasant to go and stay in the country for a time, and they felt it strongly enough to be able to make admirable verses on the occasion. Even so, *The Wish*, in Pope's own term, was no frivolous one, and was, indeed, legitimately enough born of place patriotism. It is a very good thing to want so much to go into the country that you can make living rhymes about it. It means that you really love the country, or some idea that the country stands for, and that is a genuinely patriotic emotion. For the country in such cases will always, I think, be found to be symbolic at least of the poet's homeland (we need not discuss the complication of the argument if his homeland should happen to be an adopted one); we shall hardly find Mr. Masefield or Mr. Belloc, for example, writing a poem to say how much they would like to go to Provence or Virginia, though they may think these very pleasant places. Nevertheless Pope and Rogers are in these poems expressing a phase of the emotion of place far removed

from Clare's inspiration. Clare, as we have seen, did not moralise or personify Nature, he transfigured her, but left her precisely her own image. Wordsworth and Emerson, in yet another fashion, used Nature as a handmaid to imaginative philosophy. And Wordsworth leads us part of the way towards that still further expression of the patriotism of place which we have to consider.

“The Poets, in their elegies and songs
 Lamenting the departed, call the groves,
 They call upon the hills and streams to
 mourn,
 And senseless rocks; nor idly; for they speak,
 In these their invocations, with a voice
 Obedient to the strong creative power
 Of human passion. Sympathies there are
 More tranquil, yet perhaps of kindred birth,
 That steal upon the meditative mind,
 And grow with thought. Beside yon spring
 I stood,
 And eyed its waters till we seemed to feel
 One sadness, they and I. For them a bond
 Of brotherhood is broken: time has been
 When every day, the touch of human hand
 Dislodged the natural sleep that binds them up
 In mortal stillness; and they ministered
 To human comfort.”

It was passages such as this, with which the reader of Wordsworth will be familiar, that provoked Ruskin to his complaint about the "pathetic fallacy." That Nature should share the emotions of humanity, as Wordsworth implicitly always and sometimes explicitly argued, was a proposition that to Ruskin seemed manifestly absurd, and it needs, perhaps, a very complete concession to mysticism not to allow Ruskin his point. And yet even now Wordsworth's defences may not finally have fallen. There is, I believe, already an idea projecting itself in the minds of some men of science that there is somewhere awaiting discovery the link between the so-called inorganic and organic creations. It would be outside my domain to speculate upon the possibilities here before us. But it is at least conceivable that Wordsworth in his philosophy in this respect was on the confines of revelation in which he could do no more than confess his faith, unconcernedly leaving himself open to the sceptic's challenge when it came, as it did from Ruskin. However this may be, Wordsworth is by no means by himself in his poetic creed, and some writers have even gone beyond him, not in attributing to Nature an emotional sympathy with man, but in seeing

Nature as an active participator in human affairs, as an actual person in the scene. This is an altogether distinct thing from the personifications of Nature, which were part of the usual poetic machinery of the eighteenth century, and, although they are out of fashion in our time, have never fallen wholly into disuse. These were merely devices in a convention, and although they have been wrongly or weakly used, they are not so stupid as is often supposed. But they have nothing to do with that use of Nature of which we are now speaking. This is how Mr. Thomas Hardy opens *The Return of the Native*:

“A Saturday afternoon in November was approaching the time of twilight, and the vast tract of unenclosed wild known as Egdon Heath embrowned itself moment by moment. Overhead the hollow stretch of whitish cloud shutting out the sky was as a tent which had the whole heath for its floor.

“The heaven being spread with this pallid screen and the earth with the darkest vegetation, their meeting-line at the horizon was clearly marked. In such contrast the heath wore the appearance

of an instalment of night which had taken up its place before its astronomical hour had come: darkness had to a great extent arrived hereon, while day stood distinct in the sky. Looking upwards, a furze-cutter would have been inclined to continue work; looking down, he would have decided to finish his faggot and go home. The distant rims of the world and of the firmament seemed to be a division in time no less than a division in matter. The face of the heath by its mere complexion added half an hour to evening; it could in like manner retard the dawn, sadden noon, anticipate the frowning of storms scarcely generated, and intensify the opacity of a moonless midnight to a cause of shaking and dread.

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“The place became full of a watchful intentness now; for when other things sank brooding to sleep the heath appeared slowly to awake and listen. Every night its Titanic form seemed to await something; but it had waited thus, unmoved, during so many centuries, through the crises of so many things, that it could only be imagined to await one last crisis—the final overthrow.”

Thenceforth Egdon Heath becomes, not fancifully at all, not merely a background to the story, but a dominating figure in it. Nature is here endowed with a life that is neither Wordsworth's nor Clare's, and it is questionable whether the love of place has ever expressed itself with a passion so courageous, so unquestioning, and so constant as in the great series of Wessex novels, a passion involved always with a spiritual sense that finds its consummation in the supernatural machinery of *The Dynasts*. A further example is from Mr. Lascelles Abercrombie's lovely poem *Ryton Firs*:

"Dear boys, they've killed our woods: the
ground

Now looks ashamed, to be shorn so bare;
Naked lank ridge and brooding mound
Seem shivering cowed in the April air.

"They well may starve, hills that have been
So richly and so sturdily fleeced.

Who made this upland, once so green,
Crouch comfortless, like an ill-used beast?

"We fools let loose the frantic mood
That toppled Europe down pell-mell;
It rippled against our quietude,
And Ryton Firs, like Europe, fell.

“Now the axe hews, the bill-hook lops.

The owls have flown to Clifford’s Mesne,

The foxes found another copse;

The badger trotted to Mitcheldean. . . .”

Here the figure of which we have been speaking appears in the utmost simplicity and at the same time with perfect authority.

Thus, then, we have tried to distinguish the several tones in which witness has been borne to the almost universal passion in man for the earth of his habitation. The ways of approach are many, but they lead to one altar of loyalty. How deep that loyalty is we cannot measure. It possesses a man’s life, it goes far to the moulding of his character, it inspires a devotion that makes no reservations. Earth-worship is the one religion that survives all changes, and it means something more than man’s gratitude to earth for her life-giving fruits. It is a living religion because it is in part founded on a less practical, a less capturable emotion than this. It need be defined no more exactly than by quoting Scott’s resonant malediction on the man, if there be such a one, with the “soul so dead”:

“If such there breathe, go, mark him well;

For him no minstrel raptures swell;

High though his titles, proud his name,
 Boundless in wealth as wish can claim;
 Despite those titles, power, and pelf,
 The wretch, concentr'd all in self,
 Living, shall forfeit fair renown,
 And, doubly dying, shall go down
 To the vile dust, from whence he sprung,
 Unwept, unhonour'd, and unsung."

Meditating upon this principle so common in mankind, we are prompted to question sometimes the character that is often, and persuasively, said to distinguish patriotism. Mr. Herbert Fisher, for example, in his masterly book, *The Common Weal*, claims that "patriotism has this advantage over the animal instincts. It is essentially altruistic. The patriotic man in so far as he is patriotic acts and thinks not for himself but for his country." That is finely put, and sound. But it is in no disrespect for so good a doctrine that we may ask whether altruistic is always precisely the word—whether the virtue is sometimes not more ethereal than this. I find myself standing, shall we say, at a point of vantage on Thames-side below St. Paul's, and in the vivid life of modern London I see the long succession from Shakespeare's the-

atres and the Elizabethan pageant, bright with barges and home-faring adventurers, through the rigours of Puritan England to the Restoration elegance, followed by Wits and Regencies, and broadening through Victorian "precedent to precedent" into the complex enigma of our own day. And as I look on this panorama of history I am strangely moved by the knowledge that I am part of it, that I too am an Englishman, that I can travel to foreign parts and speak familiarly of my heritage in this great story. I boast to myself, and justly, that I can call myself the peer of any man in being thus in a descent that can match any splendour in the world's records. I am, in the widest and deepest sense, a patriot. And then I remember that I share this high distinction with—what is it—seven million other people. And reflecting upon this I do not claim that my emotion is altruistic, that it is inspired by the will to serve the State of which I am a member, but I rejoice that the spiritual eminence that I so surely reach in this largeness of mood is shared by a multitude of my fellows. Of conscious altruism I can claim nothing, nor do I even aspire to it. I am enjoying an experience personal to me, desirable because it gives me individually de-

lighted satisfaction, but the beauty of it all is that I am sharing it with others innumera-
bly, and that I am wholly happy and un-
grudging in the sharing. Here truly is the
“joy in widest commonalty spread.”

Before leaving this chapter of our study it may be interesting to note an accent as it were of this particular loyalty that is characteristic of our own age in literature, if not peculiar to it. I mean the particularity with which contemporary writers, and especially the poets, map out for us their chosen landscapes. Place-names have been common enough in English literature, from the time when Chaucer lay “in Southwerk at the Tabard” and watched the folk gathering “from every shires end of Engelond,” to go on pilgrimage to Canterbury, even from the time that the “marvel befell” Piers Plowman “on a May morning on Malvern hills,” down to Arnold in the Oxford country. But never before has this use of names been given so freely the creative value that it often beautifully has in the literature of to-day. Instances will occur readily enough to every reader, Mr. A. E. Housman’s *Shropshire Lad*, Mr. Phillpotts’s Devonshire stories, Mr. W. W. Gibson’s Northumbrian idylls. In these and a score of other writers the iden-

tity of place is insisted on with an exact fervour of presentation that is as far from mere decoration as it is from the conscientious topography of Drayton's *Polyolbion*:

“By this, her owne nam'd Towne the wandring
 Froome had past:
 And quitting in her course old Dorchester at
 last,
 Approaching neere the Poole, at Warham
 on her way,
 As easelie shee doth fall into the peacefull
 Bay. . . .”

and

“Whilst Clent and Licky thus, doe both ex-
 presse their pride,
 As Salwarpe slips along by Feck'nham's
 shady side,
 That Forrest him affects in wandring to the
 Wych:
 But he, himselfe by Salts there seeking to
 enrich,
 His Feck'nham quite forgets. . . .”

It is a far cry from this to such things as Mr. Belloc's:

“So, therefore, though myself be crosst
 The shuddering of that dreadful day

When friend and fire and home are lost,
And even children drawn away—
The passer-by shall hear me still.
A boy that sings on Duncton hill.”

and John Davidson's:

“Night sank: like flakes of silver fire
The stars in one great shower came down;
Shrill blew the wind; and shrill the wire
Rang out from Hythe to Romney town.”

and Edward Thomas's:

“And for that minute a blackbird sang
Close by, and round him, mistier,
Farther and farther, all the birds
Of Oxfordshire and Gloucestershire.”

and Francis Thompson's:

“O there were flowers in Storrington. . . .”

and Mr. Kipling's Sussex by the sea, and Mr. Bottomley's Cartmel bells, and the Poet Laureate's London snow. Critics have sometimes complained that the name of a place in verse in itself can have no significance, and is at best but a tinkling prettiness unless it happens to have in it something of personal reminiscence for the reader. I do not find it so.

"I will arise and go now and go to Innisfree."

I have never been to Ireland, and I do not know where Innisfree is. But I know that the name as Mr. Yeats here uses it has a specific emotional value that is distinct from its easy syllabic grace. It not only specifies a place, it adds firmness of expression to a patriotic mood.

"The rhyme of the poet
Modulates the king's affairs,"

says Emerson. And the name of a place on a poet's tongue may influence the national destiny.

We may close, as we opened, these instances with a word in praise of London. Here is Edmund Spenser:

"At length they all to merry London came,
To merry London, my most kyndly Nurse,
That to me gave this Life's first native
source. . . ."

and then, three hundred years later, Charles Lamb:

"For my own part . . . I have no hesitation in declaring, that a mob of happy faces crowding up at the pit door

of Drury-lane Theatre, just at the hour of six, gives me ten thousand sincerer pleasures, than I could ever receive from all the flocks of silly sheep that ever whitened the plains of Arcadia or Epsom downs."

CHAPTER V

THE EXILES

“OH, to be in England
Now that April's there. . . .”

HOME thoughts from abroad—the burden has been a recurrent one through the ages. The nostalgia of the wanderer, even though his exile be voluntary, is one of the most poignant and the most universal of human emotions, and there is none that is so little affected by the spurious professions of literature. When a man says he is sick for home we know that he is speaking the truth. The distress of the first parting from a beloved home-land may be soothed by time and new interests, but the exile knows that the visitations of an old longing will come and come again, no matter how complete the severing of ties may seem to be. It is an emotion, too, that does not wait upon maturity for its development. It is active in every small boy and girl who

goes away to school, and it is generally renewed each term.

“MY DEAR MOTHER,

Come as soon as you get this letter I have made my [*thus*] ill with crying, I can hardly write this Thank you so much for your letter and stamps. I am worst than ever. I broke down just now. Oh! do come, Mother. We are not allowed to wash at night. Nearly every night I dream of home, and cry in the morning. I have private things to say to you alone that must be seen to at once. Your miserable son Lovat. Come at once.”

So wrote Lovat Fraser when he was eleven, and Bolingbroke at sixty, an exile from his country and in political disgrace, could write:

“Stripped of the rights of a British subject, of all except the meanest of them, that of inheriting, I remember that I am a Briton still. . . . I have not renounced my country, nor my friends: and by my friends I mean all those, and those alone, who are such to

their country, by whatever name they have been, or may be still distinguished; and tho in that number there should be men, of whose past ingratitude, injustice, or malice I might complain on my own account with the greatest reason. These I will never renounce. In their prosperity they shall never hear of me: in their distress, always."

The patriot's love of his country in defeat has much the same spiritual purity as the devotion of his exile. "I have led the young men of the South in battle," said Lee after the war; "I have seen many of them die on the field; I shall devote my remaining energies to training young men to do their duty in life." And again, "I believe it to be the duty of every one to unite in the restoration of the country, and the re-establishment of peace and harmony." Browning less than most poets knew the sorrows of defeat—though he was not unaware of them—and he was a traveller by his own choice; but in his *Home Thoughts from the Sea* there is something of Lee's grandeur.

"Nobly, nobly Cape Saint Vincent to the North-West died away;

Sunset ran, one glorious blood-red, reeking
into Cadiz Bay;
Bluish 'mid the burning water, full in face
Trafalgar lay;
In the dimmest North-east distance dawned
Gibraltar grand and gray;
'Here and here did England help me: how
can I help England?'—say,
Whoso turns as I, this evening, turn to God
to praise and pray,
While Jove's planet rises yonder, silent over
Africa."

The passion for a distant homeland is, perhaps, the surest testimony to the hold that the soil of a man's birth has upon the roots of his character. In these absences he discovers not only that he loves his country, but that he is as much knit into her being as are the trees of the fields. Robert Southey, in one of his letters from abroad, thanked God he was an Englishman. This was not insular arrogance: he would have thanked God equally had he been a Hottentot. He merely meant that he was realising in a mood of uncommon poignancy what a sense of nationality meant to a man's life, and nationality for him meant a vision of England, or more closely

of Keswick and the Cumbrian hills. This intensifying power of absence is a thing of which we are all sometimes conscious, but psychology, so far as I know, has not been able to explain it very clearly. It is rather a cynical view to suppose that to lose something is necessarily to love it more, that what is possessed is not truly valued until it has been taken from us. The truth would seem to be that possession, mutual possession, is a natural condition of love, and as such not only rises above anxieties, but is aware of its own happy state not by deliberate thought but by the full unhindered exercise of our being. The analogy of physical health holds good. We do not really value bodily well-being more when we are sick than when we are sound, but in the one case we think of good health in terms of conscious repining, while in the other we do not think of it at all, we enjoy it. So Rupert Brooke could live in the happy energy of his youth at Grantchester and express his delight in all that his tranquil river village meant to him in a daily ease of habit. He and his landscape were happy together, and the fortunate hours were their own sufficient calendar. But let him leave the familiar ground and find

himself in alien company, and then, content in his curiosity as he was, for no man ever had a quicker eye or a keener zest for strange surroundings, the lack of the old communion would assert itself in his thought, images that had been quietly absorbed in unconcerned affection would present themselves with an unwonted definition, and natural love would fall into a newly poignant mood of self-realisation. And we get not an access but a sudden projection of the patriot's passion in:

“ But Grantchester! ah, Grantchester!
There's peace and holy quiet there. . . .
Oh, is the water sweet and cool,
Gentle and brown, above the pool?
And laughs the immortal river still
Under the mill, under the mill?
Say, is there Beauty yet to find?
And Certainty? And Quiet kind?
Deep meadows yet, for to forget,
The lies, and truths, and pain? . . . oh!
yet
Stands the Church clock at ten to three?
And is there honey still for tea? ”

And beside this may be remembered James Elroy Flecker's *Dying Patriot*:

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“Day breaks on England down the Kentish
hills,
Singing in the silence of the meadow-footing
rills,
Day of my dreams, O day!”

moving to its splendid close:

“Sleep not, my country: though night is
here, afar
Your children of the morning are clamorous
for war:
Fire in the night, O dreams!
Though she send you as she sent you,
long ago,
South to desert, east to ocean, west to
snow,
West of these out to seas colder than the
Hebrides, must go
Where the fleet of stars is anchored, and
the young star-captains glow.”

Naturally enough war induces this mood more surely than any other condition. Then the imminence of death and the sense of service bring the love to a pitch of hardly tolerable elation. And the war of 1914-1918, with its superb armies of citizen patriots, found the love of home-land singing itself on a

thousand lips. It must have been literally a thousand, for, as is well known, the impulse to verse in those days was prevalent beyond example, and soldier after soldier attempted lyric consolation. A great deal of the verse was bad, but much of it was very good, and the theme that outdid all others was not the sense of conflict, nor the vindication of a cause, nor the glory of sacrifice, but a quite simple love of home with no philosophical application. The most famous prelude to the general song was Brooke's:

“If I should die, think only this of me:

That there's some corner of a foreign field
That is for ever England. There shall be
In that rich earth a richer dust concealed;

A dust from England bore, shaped, made
aware,

Gave, once, her flowers to love, her ways
to roam,

A body of England's, breathing English air,
Washed by the rivers, blest by suns of
home.”

And it was followed by a chorus such as has never sounded from an army in the field. And not from an army only, but from the

vast body of armies, French, German, American, and the rest of them. Historians have yet to trace the political realities of the war, but from many voices in every camp was the eternal word said there and then of that other reality of patriotism that inspired the millions who fought and died with the vision of a home-land as their inspiration above all others. It is fitting now to let a few of these voices bear their own witness. This is Francis Ledwidge in a poem dated Belgium, 1917:

“ This is a song a robin sang
 This morning on a broken tree,
 It was about the little fields
 That call across the world to me.”

And this was written by William Noel Hodgson after Loos:

“ A leaping wind from England,
 The skies without a stain,
 Clean cut against the morning
 Slim poplars after rain,
 The foolish noise of sparrows,
 The starlings in a wood—
 After the grime of battle
 We know that these are good.”

E. Wyndham Tennant, who, like Ledwidge and Hodgson, went out to death, closes his *Home Thoughts from Laventie* with:

“Hungry for Spring I bent my head,
The perfume fanned my face,
And all my soul was dancing
In that lovely little place,
Dancing with a measured step from wrecked
and shattered towns
Away . . . upon the Downs.

“I saw green banks of daffodil,
Slim poplars in the breeze,
Great tan-brown hares in gusty March
A-courting on the leas,
And meadows, with their glittering streams
—and silver-scurrying dace—
Home, what a perfect place!”

And Walter Lightowler Wilkinson opens his *Lament from the Dead* thus:

“Peace! Vex us not: we are the Dead,
We are the Dead for England slain.
(O England and the English Spring,
The English Spring, the Spring-tide rain:
Ah, God, dear God, in England now!) . . .
The snows of Death are on our brow:
Peace! Vex us not!

" Brothers, the footfalls of the year
 (The Maiden month's in England now!) . . .
 I feel them pass above my head:
 Alas, they echo on my heart!
 (Ah, God, dear God, but England now!) . . .
 Peace! Vex me not, for I am dead;
 The snows of Death are on my brow:
 Peace! Vex me not!"

Charles Hamilton Sorley, going straight to
 the war from Winchester, was killed in action
 in October 1915 at the age of twenty. In
 July he had written:

" And soon, O soon, I do not doubt it,
 With the body or without it,
 We shall all come tumbling down
 To our old wrinkled red-capped town.
 Perhaps the road up Ilsley way,
 The old ridge-track, will be my way.
 High up among the sheep and sky,
 Look down on Wantage, passing by,
 And see the smoke from Swindon town;
 And then full left at Liddington,
 Where the four winds of heaven meet
 The earth-blest traveller to greet.
 And then my face is toward the south,
 There is a singing on my mouth:
 Away to rightward I descry

My Barbury ensconced in sky,
Far underneath the Ogbourne twins,
And at my feet the thyme and whins,
The grasses with their little crowns
Of gold, the lovely Aldbourne downs,
And that old signpost (well I knew
That crazy signpost, arms askew,
Old mother of the four grass ways).
And then my mouth is dumb with praise,
For past the wood and chalk pit tiny,
A glimpse of Marlborough *ἐρατεινή*!
So I descend beneath the rail
To warmth and welcome and wassail.

.
This from the battered trenches—rough,
Jingling and tedious enough.
And so I sign myself to you:
One, who some crooked pathways knew
Round Bedwyn: who could scarcely leave
The Downs on a December eve:
Was at his happiest in shorts,
And got—not many good reports!
Small skill of rhyming in his hand—
But you'll forgive—you'll understand."

The men of Eretria, captive in Persia, did not die in action, but were none the less victims of war, and the garland from our

citizen-hero-poets may find a place for Plato's epitaph upon those exiles of antiquity:

“We who of old left the booming surge of the Ægean lie here in the mid-plain of Ecbatana: fare thou well, renowned Eretria, once our country, farewell Athens night to Eubœa, farewell dear Sea.”

Most of the themes that prevail in literature as the urgent creation of direct experience, have somewhere their avatar in myth or legend. And no figure in the records of human invention is more perfectly the embodiment of the exile's emotion for home than Proserpine, or Persephone, of the fable. So beautifully does she express the poignancy of the patriotic mood that is before us, that we may fitly consider her story for a moment in some detail. It will be remembered that Proserpine, the daughter of Jupiter and Ceres, or Demeter, the earth goddess, while gathering flowers in the meadows of Enna, her home, was carried away by Pluto, who had been inflamed by Cupid at the instigation of Venus, jealous lest Pallas and Diana should be joined by a third virginity. Pluto, the lord of Hell, ravished Proserpine away to his kingdom, of

which she became queen. Ceres, after a long search, discovered the truth and complained to Jupiter, demanding her daughter's return. The god argued that Pluto was a worthy mate, but, Ceres persisting in her suit, he promised the captive's deliverance if it could be shown that she had not tasted any of the fruits of Acheron. One of the shades, Ascalaphus, declared the fact that she had eaten a pomegranate, and was changed into an owl by Ceres for his pains. Thereupon a compromise was arranged, that Proserpine should remain one half of each year in Hell as queen with Pluto, returning with the spring to spend the other half with her mother on earth.

The myth thus primarily becomes significant of the principle of fertility lying hidden in the shades through winter, and manifesting itself again at the prime of the year. As such it is one of the fundamental fables of the world. But these fables always have an explicitly human equation; they are always told in terms of individual people in particular circumstances. And rather strangely the story of Proserpine has been told in poetry much more commonly from the point of view of Ceres than from that of Pros-

erpine herself. Ceres, lamenting her loss and unwearying in her search, appeased at length by the condition of Pluto's yearly surrender, is a familiar figure in the poets, and she has inspired them nearly always to happy invention. Ovid tells the story of the rape with beautiful incident—how Proserpine (in Sandys's translation)

“cryes (with feare appall'd)
To her Companions; oft her Mother call'd.
And as shee tore th' adornment of her haire,
Downe fell the flow'rs which in her lap she
bare.

And such was her sweet Youth's simplicity,
That their losse also made the Virgin crie.”

He describes the descent into Hell with her ravisher, and then with much tenderness the quest of Ceres:

“ Mean-while, through all the earth, and all
the Maine

The fearfull Mother sought her child in
vaine.

Not dewy-hair'd Aurora, when she rose,
Nor Hesperus, could witness her repose.”

The incidents of the story follow as they have here been outlined, with some elaboration of

Ceres' part, but of Proserpine there is no more than that Jove,

“his sister's discontent to cheare,
Betweene her and his Brother parts the yeare.
The Goddesses now in either Empire sways:
Six months with Ceres, six with Pluto staves.”

And this Ceres theme we find recurrently in poetry. Milton lends it his music for a sublime moment:

“Not that faire field
Of Enna, where Proserpine gathring flours,
Herself a fairer Floure by gloomie Dis (Pluto)
Was gatherd, which cost Ceres all that pain
To seek her through the world. . . .”

Tennyson's *Demeter and Persephone* is really Demeter soliloquising, triumphant that at least her daughter, still to be queen of Hell, shall the

“garner'd Autumn also reap with me,
Earth-mother, in the harvest hymns of Earth
The worship which is Love, and see no more
The Stone, the Wheel, the dimly-glimmering
lawns

Of that Elysium, all the hateful fires
Of torment, and the shadowy warrior glide
Along the silent field of Asphodel.”

Meredith names his poem *The Appeasement of Demeter*, and tells of the gradual relenting of the Goddess from the mood in which:

“the gloom she saw,
Well draped her direful musing; for in gloom,
In thicker gloom, deep down the cavern-maw,
Her sweet had vanished. . . .”

Mr. Robert Bridges' lovely masque of Demeter has also the characteristic of paying no attention to Proserpine from the moment of the rape until after the terms of restoration have been decided upon, and the central anxiety has been relieved. When Proserpine (Persephone in Mr. Bridges' version of the story) is seen again it is on the note of deliverance:

“I am restor'd to thee, and evermore
Shall be restor'd. . . .”

And, curiously enough, when the poets do turn their attention from Ceres to Proserpine, they seldom consider her in the most moving times of her story, the times of her earth-longing in Hell. Keats mentions her at the season of her release:

“'Tis the grot
Of Proserpine, when Hell, obscure and hot,
Doth her resign; and with her tender hands
She dabbles, on the cool and sluicy sands. . . .”

Swinburne sees her in the shades, gravely intent upon her queenly offices in Hell, not remembering earth at all:

“Pale, beyond porch and portal,
Crowned with calm leaves, she stands
Who gathers all things mortal
With cold immortal hands;
Her languid lips are sweeter
Than love's who fears to greet her
To men that mix and meet her
From many times and lands.

“She waits for each and other,
She waits for all men born;
Forgets the earth her mother,
The life of fruits and corn. . . .”

Shelley pictures her roaming the plain of Enna before the coming of Pluto:

“Sacred Goddess, Mother Earth,
Thou from whose immortal bosom
Gods, and men, and beasts have birth,
Leaf and blade, and bud and blossom,
Breathe thine influence most divine
On thine own child, Proserpine.

“If with mists of evening dew
Thou dost nourish these young flowers

Till they grow, in scent and hue,
 Fairest children of the Hours,
 Breathe thine influence most divine
 On thine own child, Proserpine.”

It is true that he wrote this song for Mary Shelley's little drama *Proserpine*—or in any case she used it, and in her play we find the unusual note for which we have been looking. Her *Proserpine*, it may be said, speaks with the assurance of her yearly ascent to earth already fixed, but in these lines there is a recognition of the longing that she knows will always be hers in Hell:

“Dear Mother, let me kiss that tear which
 steals
 Down your pale cheek altered by care and
 grief.
 This is not misery; 'tis but a slight change
 From our late happy lot. Six months with
 thee,
 Each moment freighted with an age of
 love:
 And the six short months in saddest Tar-
 tarus
 Shall pass in dreams of swift returning joy.
 Six months together we shall dwell on
 earth,

Six months in dreams we shall companions
be,
Jove's doom is void; we are for ever
joined."

But the fuller realisation of this mood, the mood that gives Proserpine her tenderest and most immortal grace, is to be found in Stephen Phillips's *Christ in Hades*. This poet is forgotten for the moment, or neglected at least, but by such passages as these he cannot fail to come again to remembrance. Christ is entering Hell:

"So the excluded ghosts in Hades felt
A waft of early sweet, and heard the rain
Of Spring beginning over them; they all
Stood still, and in each other's faces looked.
And restless grew their queen Persephone;
Who, like a child, dreading to be observed
By awful Dis, threw little glances down
Toward them, and understood them with
her eyes.

Quickly she whispered: 'Come, my Hermes,
come!

'Tis time to fetch me! Ah, through all my
veins

The sharpness of the spring returns: I hear

The stalk revive with sap, and the first
drops

On green illumined grass; now over me
The blades are growing fast; I cannot rest.
He comes, he comes! Yet with how slow a
step.'

.

This is no god at all,
Only some grieving human shade. . . .

.

. . . then, stretching out her arms, she
said:

'O all fresh out of beautiful sunlight!
Thine eyes are still too dazed to see us clear.
Was it not difficult to come away
Straight from the greenness to the dimness?
Now

It is the time of tender, opening things.
Above my head the fields murmur and wave,
And breezes are just moving the clear heat.
O the mid-noon is trembling on the corn,
On cattle calm, and trees in perfect sleep.
And hast thou empty come? Hast thou
not brought

Even a blossom with the noise of rain
And smell of earth about it, that we all
Might gather round and whisper over it?'"

No excuse is needed for the length of this

extract. The patriotism of place seen through the emotion of exile has rarely found lovelier expression than it does here.

This chapter has been somewhat empirical in manner; the poets and the seers have felt thus or thus, and therefore, has been the suggestion, it is so. But the earlier part of this essay has, I believe, been argumentative enough, and there is more to follow. There is no harm in pausing for a little to let allusion have its way freely upon our ideas—in making our appeal more copiously to authority at some times than at others. And to fulfil the mood, I will close this note on the patriot exiles with three stanzas from Mr. Charles Murray's poem, "The Alien," published in his book *Hamewith*, written from South Africa to a Scots homeland:

"In Afric's fabled fountains I have panned
the golden sand—

Caught crocodile with baviaan for bait—
I've fished, with blasting gelatine for hook
an' gaff an' wand,

An' lured the bearded barbel to his fate:
But take your Southern rivers that meander
to the sea,

And set me where the Leochel joins the
Don,

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With eighteen feet of greenheart an' the
tackle running free—

I want to have a clean fish on.

“The eland an' the tsessebe I've tracked from
early dawn,

I've heard the roar of lions shake the
night,

I've fed the lonely bush-veld camp on dik-
kop an' korhaan,

An' watched the soaring vulture in his
flight;

For horn an' head I've hunted, yet the spoil
of gun and spear,

My trophies, I would freely give them all,
To creep through the mist an' heather on the
great red deer—

I want to hear the blackcock call.

“In hot December weather when the grass is
caddie high

I've driven clean an' lost the ball an'
game,

When winter veld is burned an' bare I've
cursed the cuppy lie—

The language is the one thing still the
same;

For dongas, rocks, an' scuffled greens give
me the links up North,

The whins, the broom, the thunder of the
surf,

The three old fellows waiting where I used
to make a fourth—

I want to play a round on turf."

CHAPTER VI

THE REBELS

ONE of the chief perplexities of all liberal political and social thought through the ages has been the rights of dissenting minorities. The case of the conscientious objector in war-time has already been glanced at; but here we have opinion forming in an abnormal environment, and it can neither hope to be dealt with by normal measures, nor does it help us very much in the consideration of the minority's claims in the normal life of the State. With the country in desperate danger of its life, it may be necessary to bully the people who refuse to defend her, as Voltaire said, to encourage the others. Many warm-hearted people think that it is so, and we may leave it at that. Fortunately, in spite of much industrious effort in that direction, society is not designed primarily with a view to warlike emergencies, and history is plenti-

fully peopled with rebels who, however undesirable their characters may seem to the priests of conformity, cannot be dealt with summarily as traitors. And it is rebels of this kind that claim our attention now for a little time; the rebels, who somehow, much as we may resent it, refuse to be deprived altogether of the patriot's dignity; who, indeed, incense many people by suggesting a patriotic zeal of more than common courage and candour.

The minority of simple political dissent is comparatively easy to deal with in terms of social morality. It is the product, generally speaking, of disagreement with a given political measure or course of measures, and the question of personal integrity is usually not raised by its opposition; which opposition may, of course, be on the part of a group or of an individual. The case of the American Civil War, which has already been advanced in another direction, will serve again. Setting aside the slave issue altogether, the dispute centred on the right or the disability of the single State to secede from the United States of which it was a constituent member. The arguments on both sides were voluminous and often effective, and to this day opinion is by

no means unanimous as to the political justice of the event. But whatever the strength or weakness of the South's case may have been, it has no more been doubted that it was supported by many men of perfect integrity, than that it was as sincerely opposed by many others of equally firm conviction. Mr. Gamaliel Bradford, himself a Northerner, in what is perhaps the best book that has been written on Lee, in considering his hero's choice between Virginia and the Union, remarks:

“Finally, if one may quote one's own feeling as perhaps representative of many, I do not hesitate to say that in the certainly most improbable, but perhaps not wholly impossible, contingency of a future sectional separation in the country, however much I might disapprove of such separation and its causes, I should myself be first, last, and always a son and subject of New England and of Massachusetts.”

One sees Mr. Bradford's position precisely, and I think one would admire it to the point of emulation. But in doing so it is difficult not to realise its rather perplexing implications. It amounts really to a confession of

faith, "my country right or wrong," a faith as honourable as it is old. It goes beyond this to "my geographical area of the country right or wrong," and again beyond that to "my State within that area right or wrong." I suppose that even beyond that it could be refined into "my town—" or any smaller unit that you like. And I have never been able to see how the champions of self-determination, a doctrine clearly with so much to commend it, could, for example, on logical grounds, however reasonably they might do so on grounds of obvious expediency and common-sense, refuse the West Riding of Yorkshire the right to declare that it would no longer be subject to the laws of England if it felt so minded to do. This is by no means the fantastic pressing of an argument that it may seem. No one in practice could seriously accept such a proposal from a section of the community, supposing it to be possible for it to be made, but it is difficult to see how in political logic (if there is such a thing), apart from expediency, it could be denied. The truth is that policy and logic have always been bad team-fellows, and must always be so. Policy, even when it is not corrupt, is essentially founded on the principle of trial

and error. The sufficient reason why the West Riding of Yorkshire should conform to English law is that in experience it has been found most convenient that it should do so. But the fact does not deal finally with the argument against such nonconformity, if for any reason it should at some time or another be sincerely advanced. And that it is so advanced now and again history shows us. It was by Lee and Virginia and the other seceding States of the South. It was effectively answered by the forces of expediency, and so answered for the general good. But the answer left Lee and his fellows with their honour splendidly untarnished. Minority right failed to assert itself, but it went down with the respect even of its subjectors. Lincoln did not even like to hear its advocates spoken of as rebels. It is not paradoxical to say that, while he was fighting them with his utmost energy in the name of national unity, he would have been the last man to deny them the character of patriots.

We must consider a little more closely that phrase, "my country right or wrong." To demand that the citizen should support his State in a cause which beyond all reasonable question is an unjust or even seriously an

unwise one, is to make demands upon private conscience which no person or institution has the right to make in any circumstances. Mr. Fisher, in the book already mentioned, gives a concise statement of the case. "The notion that the State is sacrosanct, that it can do no wrong, that it must be supported and defended no matter what iniquities it may perpetrate, that the one and only law of citizenship is 'my country right or wrong,' is utterly contrary to the dictates of the individual conscience." And on the face of it disagreement with this position is impossible. So far as the reservation goes, it is a necessary one for the safeguarding of individual freedom. But the difficulty is that the problem hardly ever presents itself in this extremely simple character. The activities of a State to which the individual citizen may take the strongest possible exception, are nearly always activities which at their worst still leave a very considerable ground for disagreement between honourable men as to their justification and fitness. If the State suddenly laid it down as a principle that it was desirable in the national interest for its citizens to conduct their transactions with foreigners in a spirit of what is known as

“sharp business practice,” and if, further, the State tried to devise machinery to enforce such a principle, every decent citizen would be obliged to oppose and even to take what steps he could to destroy that embodiment of the State that proposed a course so manifestly shocking to the common conscience of mankind. This is, I know, to suppose an extremely fantastical case, but it will serve as showing the kind of circumstance in which the citizen would unquestionably be justified in rebellion up to any point, and how far from such circumstance the sort of actual case usually is against which citizens do, in fact, rebel in the name of conscience. The phrase “my country right or wrong” is an effective one for use in debate, but it generally does not exactly correspond to the truth in cases where it is used. We really, in order to see precisely what is the problem presented to the citizen, need some clumsier phrase, such as “my country whether or not I am finally convinced in my mind that she is wholly right.” Two examples from modern history may help us, the last Boer War and the war of 1914-1918. In the first of these it is well known that a very large number of Englishmen, whose love of their country

no one could question, and whose record both in public and private service was unsurpassed, men of courage and clean conduct, were violently opposed to the war from beginning to end. The charge that they were what was called pro-Boer was in such cases wholly irrelevant. Most of them knew nothing about the Boers, and in the ordinary way of their lives cared nothing. Equally unfounded was the complementary charge that they were anti-English, that they were glad of an opportunity to express a natural disloyalty. The truth was that these men, who must not at all be confused with those conscientious objectors of whom we have already spoken, who are pledged against war in any circumstances, did honestly believe that their State was engaging in an enterprise which was unjust and wantonly aggressive. But, whatever our personal opinion may be, we have first to ask ourselves whether the enterprise was, in fact, these things beyond any reasonable dispute in fair minds. And supposing, for the sake of argument, our own sympathy to incline towards the dissenters, we are, on asking this question, immediately faced with the necessity of allowing that the enterprise was not of this kind, that it was one of very

complex causes and issues, that it was supported by many men whose good faith and understanding could no more be questioned than our own, and that it has historically shown itself not to have been an ill-conceived one. Much the same thing happened in the later war. It was loudly proclaimed by the Allied Powers that their cause was that of the integrity of small nations, and respect for international treaties, and vast numbers of the citizens of those Powers believed this and died for their faith. But there were always from the beginning a great many people in the Allied countries who, not being conscientious objectors at all by conviction, did not believe that this was a true statement of the case. They believed that their own Governments, in common with others, had engaged in reckless stupidities, carried on all their negotiations in an atmosphere of jealousy, had been indifferent to all interests but their own, and had finally become involved with their dupes and their rivals in a common disaster. A little careful consideration applied to a small knowledge of history and some intelligent experience of human nature might have convinced anyone that neither version of the facts was anything like being exclusively

a true one. No more for our present purpose need be said as to what the true one was, than that it lay in the middle region between these extremes of disinterested virtue and corrupt stupidity. But to realise this, even without further definition, is to realise also that to any evenly balanced mind the problem could never present itself as being one merely of "my country right or wrong." The reason why a great number of people whose private judgment was that there was more to inspire suspicion of than confidence in the purity of Allied motives, nevertheless lent their energies unreservedly to the pursuit of the war, was that they realised that when everything had been said the question could not be reduced to these plain terms of right and wrong, and that the State of which they were a part had, when all defects of judgment and character had been allowed for, decided upon a course of action which could no longer be disputed. And it is interesting to remember that, unlike the case of the Boer War, there were very few people who, not being conscientious objectors by general conviction, nevertheless opposed this war in particular.

The moral position of the people who,

finding themselves of a mind with those critics of the war of 1914-1918, go beyond criticism to a refusal of State allegiance, has already been discussed. Their conduct results either in a personal resistance, active or passive, which the State punishes if it can, or in a corporate act of rebellion, which often fails with disaster, but occasionally succeeds with honour. Cromwell was a rebel, but I do not know that even the people who most dislike him any longer deny that he was an English patriot. The truth is that underlying nearly all wars are not distinctions between obvious right and obvious wrong, but differences of opinion brought to furnace heat, and that the question to be answered is as to which opinion can most permanently establish itself, not only in the clash of arms but in the subsequent times of peace.

There is, however, another aspect of the citizen's disagreement with State decisions, and one which in the history of the world has had a wider influence upon mankind than such disagreement engendered by a state of war. This is the objection on the part of the citizen to a State measure which, although it may in some instances be indirectly connected with war is not necessarily so, and in any

case does not involve the citizen himself in an immediate decision as to his own active participation in war. Large numbers of Englishmen in the past generation have spent a great deal of their time in bewildered anger at what they conceive to be their country's abuse of power in India, in Egypt, or in Ireland. In America to-day there is a fierce conflict of opinion as to what the duty of the United States Government may be to the rest of the world. At almost every age in the history of every country there has been a minority inspired by disapproval of some State action or another to a passion for transcending the ordinary routine of opposition. Of this minority feeling, considered apart from the question of war, three things are to be observed. First, that the people who share it are not, in our modern civilisation, deprived of their part in State privileges in consequence of their dissent. They who in this way disapprove of State action share equally with those who support it in the security and conveniences which the State itself provides, so long as they do not compel the attention of the constable. This, at least, is the theory of our modern communities, and it is one of the most striking

testimonies to the advance of civilisation. It is, in fact, the natural expression of one of the most purely moral ideas to which man has attained, that thought and speech should be free. The second observation that suggests itself is that the people who make up these minorities are commonly as good citizens in their ordinary conduct, and as devoted to their country, as their fellows, and are respected as such. It is another reason for hope in this stumbling world that men do very rarely hate each other for their opinions. The sceptic may remark that this is because people rarely hold opinions with any conviction, but the poet might retort that many people care too deeply for opinions at the expense of life. But the third observation that we have to make is less consoling. It is that there are always, among the minorities of which we are speaking, a number of ardent and even chivalrous souls who allow themselves to become obsessed and embittered by one ruling grievance. There is a distinction to be made here. There is no purer patriot than the man who cannot bear to see his country a party to dishonour or cruelty because he loves her so much. This is a quality, and an eminent one, in all the best affections of life.

No man but a fool resents the criticism of those who love him. It is one thing, however, to reproach your country with her follies and errors and to do it as decisively as you can, and another to confuse her lapses with her essential character. It is at this point that criticism ceases and hatred begins, and it cannot be questioned that there are some unhappy people, who are zealous in their ideals and who would be shocked at the suggestion, but who, nevertheless, do habitually think of their country in a mood of antagonism. This temper, except, as we shall see, when it has been quickened by some sense of personal indignity, has never been very successful in impressing itself upon literature, since hatred is a poor impulse to creation. A controlling distaste for one's own country will express itself at worst in loosely vituperative journalism, and at best, if best it be, in the jargon of a vague internationalism, which will be found upon examination to be far removed from universal good-will. Something will be said of this later.

It must be allowed, however, that sometimes even writers whose essential patriotism is above suspicion are apt to get their political

emotions a little out of perspective. No poet, by tradition and instinct, can have been more devoted to England than Wilfred Scawen Blunt. One cannot question the patriotism of the man who could realise his native landscape with the tenderness of these lines from *A Day in Sussex*:

“The dove did lend me wings. I fled away
From the loud world which long had troubled
me.

Oh lightly did I flee when hoyden May
Threw her wild mantle on the hawthorn
tree.

I left the dusty high road, and my way
Was through deep meadows, shut with
copses fair.

A choir of thrushes poured its roundelay
From every hedge and every thicket there.
Mild, moon-faced kine looked on, where in
the grass

All heaped with flowers I lay, from noon
till eve.

And hares unwitting close to me did pass,
And still the birds sang, and I could not
grieve. . . .”

[And who could also present so gracious an idyll of English delights as in his *Idler's*

Calendar, with its amiable gallantry of sentiment:

“ I still love London in the month of May,
By an old habit, spite of dust and din.
I love the fair adulterous world, whose way
Is by the pleasant banks of Serpentine. . . .”

and:

“ It is our custom, once in every year,
Mine and two others’, when the chestnut
trees
Are white at Bushey, Ascot being near,
To drive to Hampton Court, and there,
at ease
In that most fair of English palaces,
Spend a long summer’s day. . . .”

and:

“ To the high breezes of the Goodwood Down
London has fled, and there awhile forgets
In weariness of limb on lawns new-mown
And in green shadows all its wars and
frets. . . .”

and:

“ But other years brought other joys. Alas!
Where is fair Rosamund, our heart’s first
queen,

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Whose foot so lightly trod with us the
grass,

Though burdened with the hundred loves
of men,

At Kew, at Skindle's? But no more of this.

We still have joys, and still old Thames
is green.

Still on his back we float awhile and press
His hand in hope, and call it happiness."

I have made these rather copious extracts to make it clear beyond any doubt that Wilfred Scawen Blunt loved his country with an intimacy that no estrangement could permanently impair. And yet there were times when his natural love for England seemed at least to be swept away by what he held to be her shameful misadministration in Egypt.

"Oh, insolence of strength! Oh, boast of
wisdom!

Oh, poverty in all things truly wise!

Thinkest thou, England, God can be out-
witted

For ever thus by him who sells and buys?

"Thou sellest the sad nations to their ruin.

What hast thou bought? The child
within the womb,

The son of him thou slayest to thy hurting,
Shall answer thee, 'An Empire for thy
tomb.'

.

"Thou art become a by-word for dissembling,
A beacon to thy neighbours for all fraud.
Thy deeds of violence men count and reckon.
Who takes the sword shall perish by the
sword.

"Thou hast deserved men's hatred. They
shall hate thee.

Thou hast deserved men's fear. Their
fear shall kill.

Thou hast thy foot upon the weak. The
weakest

With his bruised head shall strike thee on
the heel.

"Thou wentest to this Egypt for thy pleasure.
Thou shalt remain with her for thy sore
pain.

Thou hast possessed her beauty. Thou
wouldst leave her.

Nay. Thou shalt lie with her as thou hast
lain.

.

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“All shall be counted thee a crime,—thy
patience

With thy impatience. Thy best thought
shall wound.

Thou shalt grow weary of thy work thus
fashioned,

And walk in fear with eyes upon the
ground.

.

“Thou hadst no pity in thy day of triumph.

These shall not pity thee. The world
shall move

On its high course and leave thee to thy
silence,

Scorned by the creatures that thou
couldst not love. . . .”

The passion of conviction in such a malediction as this is manifest. But it is a malediction. The mood of criticism, of an eager desire to persuade, of appeal to nobler qualities that the accuser sees as in eclipse, has passed into a mood of bitterness, when there is no longer any desire to correct, but only an almost delighted fury of denunciation and doom, which is hardly relieved by the concluding stanza of the poem:

“Therefore I do not grieve. Oh, hear me,
Egypt!

Even in death thou art not wholly dead.
And hear me, England! Nay. Thou needs
must hear me.

I had a thing to say. And it is said.”

It would be difficult to contend when Blunt wrote these lines, together with a good many others to be found in his work, he had any love of England left in his heart at all. His grievance was an honest one, and has commanded the sympathy of many intelligent people. But it became an obsession with him, and in losing touch for the moment with his own patriotic spirit he became by so much the less persuasive advocate of the causes (for Egypt was not his only provocation) that he so tempestuously urged.

A more fortunate poet in his differences, and again one of our own time, has been Sir William Watson. A constant theme in his poetry has been the proud consciousness of his English allegiance. Not even accusations of disloyalty could shake it, could, indeed, do anything but confirm it.

“Friend, call me what you will: no jot
care I:

I that shall stand for England till I die.

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England! The England that rejoiced to
see

Hellas unbound, Italy one and free;
The England that had tears for Poland's
doom,

And in her heart for all the world made
room. . . ."

These lines were written "On Being Styled 'Pro Boer.'" In *Wordsworth's Grave*, and a score of other poems, the love and peace and beauty of England, and a sense of her story, pervade every line. Yet no poet of our age has been more courageous in declaring his country to be at fault when he felt that she was so. But never, even when the quarrel seemed to be most irreconcilable, has he for a moment forgotten what is the only fitting mood from which the patriot may speak in reproof.

"Not she, the England I behold,
My mistress is; nor yet
The England beautiful of old,
Whom Englishmen forget.

"The England of my heart is she,
Long hoped and long deferred,
That ever promises to be,
And ever breaks her word."

Sir William Watson's voice has, indeed, sometimes become just a little strident in the denunciation of countries other than his own. Abdul the Turk was no doubt as bad as any one could paint him, but we hardly feel his iniquity the more certainly for:

"Thou with the brightest of Hell's aureoles,
Dost shine supreme, incomparably crowned,
Immortally, beyond all mortals, damned."

But Sir William Watson has sometimes felt very nearly like that about the English Government, and yet he has not allowed his passion to alienate his true England from his loyalty. Even in his one book of prevailing invective, *The Purple East*, with such outbursts as:

"Never, O craven England, nevermore
Prate thou of generous effort, righteous
aim,"

and

"But in his merry England our St. George
Sleeps a base sleep beside his idle spear,"

he reminds himself, in the lines,

"O sons of England . . .
Ye can arise, reclaim your manliness,
And flee the things that are unmaking you."

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Still in your midst there dwells a remnant. . . .
Hearken their call, and heed, while yet is
time,
Lest ye be lulled too deep to wake again,"

that his familiar England is not one that "prates" of her qualities, that the sleep of her patron is after all but a sleep. The defect of the book is rather rhetorical than one of temper. The poet allows his own words, coming from a source of just anger, sometimes to betray him into an excited eloquence that exceeds, as it appears, his own original intention. But, angry as the book is, it never hardens into the implacable mood of Mr. Blunt's lines. Sir William Watson is very out of terms with his country, but his difference, we feel, does not really obscure his affection, and there is always the promise, however subdued, of:

"Behold, she is risen who lay asleep so long,
Our England, our Belovèd! We have seen
The swelling of the waters, we have heard
The thundering cataracts call. Behold, she
is risen,
Lovelier in resurrection than the face
Of vale or mountain, when, with storming
tears,

'At all Earth's portals knocks the impo-
tunate Spring. . . ."

The grounds of protest have not always been as explicit as Egypt and Armenia; Milton, for example, was encouraging Fairfax in a general way against monarchic and episcopal sins in his charge:

"O yet a nobler task awaites thy hand;
For what can Warr, but endless warr
still breed,
Till Truth, & Right from Violence be
freed,
And Public Faith cleard from the shamefull
brand
Of Public Fraud. In vain doth Valoue
bleed
While Avarice, & Rapine share the land."

and Wordsworth was even less specific in the invocation of Milton himself that he in turn made:

"Milton! thou shouldst be living at this
hour:
England hath need of thee: she is a fen
Of stagnant waters: altar, sword, and pen,
Fireside, the heroic wealth of hall and
bower,

Have forfeited their ancient English dower
 Of inward happiness. We are selfish men;
 Oh! raise us up, return to us again;
 And give us manners, virtue, freedom,
 power.

Thy soul was like a Star, and dwelt apart;
 Thou hadst a voice whose sound was like
 the sea:

Pure as the naked heavens, majestic, free,
 So didst thou travel on life's common way,
 In cheerful godliness; and yet thy heart
 The lowliest duties on herself did lay."

But whether the revolt of opinion has been on general or particular grounds, so long as it has been concerned with the public interest, it has never, in the modern world at least, failed to be recognised as a right attaching to the principle of liberty, and it has not been looked upon as sufficient reason for bringing its instruments into public discredit, however freely they may be censured by private judgment. Political philosophy, as distinct from party prejudice, has, in short, learnt in matters of opinion to acknowledge the motive force of patriotism as readily in the minority as in the majority.

Minority opinion has, further, established

its claim to general respect in one especial way. Save in the unusual instances where it is the result of a wanton will to obstruction in disordered minds, it is safely accepted as the genuine expression of conviction, and is free of any suspicion of thoughtless conformity. Whenever an important measure has to be considered by a community or nation, it will be dealt with in three different ways. A great number of people will wait upon the decision of the State, in the person of the Government, and follow that decision without further question. They will do this partly from a natural disinclination to decide anything for themselves, partly from fear of public criticism, partly from a notion that it is the Government's appointed job to make decisions, and again partly from a vague superstition that right is always with the big battalions. These people in an undistinguished way are the foundation of the State; they do not give the State its more notable grace of character nor any intellectual eminence, but they are the surest safeguard of its stability. Nobody admires them with any enthusiasm, but they make for continuity, they confidently invite their Lord God to arise and scatter their enemies, and, for what it is worth, they

decide elections. This latter proposition is sounder than may appear at first glance. It might be supposed, from the traditional swing of the pendulum from one party to another in the history of governments, that this great mass of electors, far from being docile in conformity, was extremely volatile in its opinions, and looked upon a Ministry as something rather to be turned out at the first opportunity than to be supported without question. But this is not really so. It must be remembered that to these people, the authority that they respect, the leaders that they instinctively regard as the Government of the country, are not the party that happens to be in office at a given moment, but the party to which they feel traditionally attached. For many years this class in Birmingham, that is to say, the majority of citizens in Birmingham, felt instinctively that the head of the English Government was Joseph Chamberlain, whether he happened to be in office or in Opposition. And it would be found upon investigation that the recurrent change from one Government to another is not decided by these people at all, who do go steadily through life fixed in their political allegiance, and untroubled by the considera-

tion of issues on their merits. At a recent election an eager and very able young Liberal candidate canvassed a Tory stronghold. He held enthusiastic meetings all over the constituency, even in the works-yard of his opponent, who in the meantime seemed to be stirring no public feeling at all. On the eve of the poll the neophyte, hurrying from one crowded hall to another and cheered in the streets, was encouraged into the considered belief that he had every chance of making political history. The result was declared, and in a vote of ten thousand the majority against him was over seven thousand. He did not make political history, but he learnt something about the nature of political conformity.

What really decides the alternations of government from one party to another is the second body of opinion that we may look for in any community. This is the more active opinion, such as actuated those citizens of whom we have spoken who questioned the causes of the war and yet prosecuted it. This inquiring opinion is likely to congregate in certain centres, for industrial and in some cases geographical reasons, and will often be powerful enough to decide an election when

the conforming opinion is divided, as it often is, between two allegiances. In exceptional circumstances there may be a complete upheaval of political opinion throughout the entire country, as when a Government has committed some more than usually obvious blunder, or when an unexpectedly obnoxious election cry is raised. But these convulsions are momentary only; once the occasion has passed the forces of conformity relapse into their old habits, fairly evenly divided in their favours between parties, and the fortunes of office are decided by the constituencies where the body of mobile opinion has the casting vote. And this body of opinion, while it rightly looks upon untrammelled speech at election time as one of the most effective ways in which to express its convictions from one emergency to another in State affairs, also has representative ambitions and knows its power of achieving them, and so far shares the character of conformity in working efficiently within the political machine.

The third kind of opinion in the community is that of the articulate minority, shifting from point to point in the body politic, and having very little, if any, hope of effective representation. It is adventurous, often not very

prudent, and sometimes fanatical. But it is politically disinterested. It expects no public reward, and it is prepared to be refused even a public hearing. It knows that its influence will be hardly perceptible in the great normal life of the State, and it often seems to make little or no progress. But more than any other body of opinion it is controlled by conscience. And people, however indifferent they may remain to its interests, do come to recognise this fact about it, and to hold it in especial, though often grudging, respect. They like to talk about the minority man as being a little crazy, but they know better in their hearts. And so minority opinion, little direct effect as it may seem to have upon the political fortunes of a nation, has always a very important share in determining the distinction of a nation's character. The finest patriotism may often be very unpopular. At the summit of his career, when he was perhaps the most observed figure in the world, Woodrow Wilson allowed himself to be broken in the advocacy of a cause unpopular in his own country. He did not retract a word of his advocacy, and he died virtually a martyr to his faith. And history will yet write that by this very faith he won for

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himself a high and enduring place on the roll of American patriots.

“I will not cease from mental fight,
Nor shall my sword sleep in my hand,
Till we have built Jerusalem
In England’s green and pleasant land.”

so cried Blake in an inspiration of patriotic ecstasy. But all that his country gave Blake for preaching the gospel of beauty and clean imagination was poverty and neglect, and, as Swinburne tells us, academicians refused to take his hand, seeing in him but an old man who had to go out to fetch his own supper porter. And yet the most industrious of Woodrow Wilson’s and Blake’s detractors were embarrassed in their minds, apprehensive that after all theirs was not the last word.

The minority opinion which we have so far considered is directed on grounds of public interest against either a particular measure or a general disposition of Government. There is another kind of minority opinion, which is inspired by a sense of personal injustice, real or imaginary. Byron and Shelley are examples, distinct in character, though not unlike in circumstance. Both of

them, it is true, were political rebels by instinct, Byron because he enjoyed the excitement of opposition for its own sake, Shelley because every government, as he saw it, was actuated more by tyranny than by good-will, and was thus a constant challenge to his ideal philosophy. But both of them were also in effect driven out of their country by social persecution directed upon them as individuals, and both were persuaded, justly or not, that they had been very ill-used. How far did these poets allow their own fortunes to affect their patriotic views? Byron was twenty-eight when the quarrel with his wife tumbled him from a dazzling social reputation and made him a figure of public obloquy. This is no place to discuss the merits of the case, but however right or wrong Byron may have been, he was not unreasonably incensed with the vulgar sensationalism with which society enjoyed his misfortune. For misfortune Byron knew it to be, however inevitable, and however injured he may have felt himself. Lady Byron had the whip hand and she used it. Among other gestures of impatience Byron wrote two sets of verses, not admirable in themselves, but not wholly inexplicable. He sent

these to Murray, not for publication. A few copies were printed off for private circulation, and one of these fell into the hands of a London editor who thereupon printed them in his paper. One editor after another followed with vehement expressions of an outraged moral sense that any man should write such things, and, to convince their readers of the justice of the censure, proceeded to print both pieces in full. Byron's private calamity, which had begun long before the separation, became an irresponsible scandal with a salacious public, and Byron left the country, prouder of nothing less than of being an Englishman.

“I depart,
Whither I know not; but the hour's gone by,
When Albion's lessening shores could grieve
or glad mine eye.”

For the rest of his life he seems to have regretted his exile very little so far as his country itself was concerned. Once or twice there is just a note of such tenderness in his verse:

“I did remind thee of our own dear Lake,
By the old Hall which may be mine no
more.

Leman's is fair; but think not I forsake
The sweet remembrance of a dearer shore:
Sad havoc Time must with my memory
make,
Ere that or thou can fade these eyes before;
Though, like all things which I have loved,
they are
Resigned for ever, or divided far."

More generally the recollection has a sharper tone:

"As for the ladies, I have nought to say,
A wanderer from the British world of
Fashion,
Where I, like other 'dogs, have had my
day,'
Like other men, too, may have had my
passion—
But that, like other things, has passed away,
And all her fools whom I *could* lay the
lash on:
Foes, friends, men, women, now are nought
to me
But dreams of what has been, no more
to be."

But when his mind returns to England at all
it is usually in a mood of raillery or invective,
lighting in a phrase on

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“ ‘G—d damn!’—though syllables intense—
Nucleus of England’s native eloquence. . . .”

or finding more deliberation, as in

“ Shall noble Albion pass without a phrase
From a bold Briton in her wonted praise?
‘ Arts—arms—and George—and glory—and
the Isles,
And happy Britain, wealth, and Freedom’s
smiles,
White cliffs, that held invasion far aloof,
Contented subjects, all alike tax-proof,
Proud Wellington, with eagle beak so curled,
That nose, the hook where he suspends the
world!
And Waterloo, and trade, and—(hush! not
yet
A syllable of imposts or of debt)—
And ne’er (enough) lamented Castlereagh,
Whose penknife slit a goose-quill t’other
day—
And, “pilots who have weathered every
storm”—
(But, no, not even for rhyme’s sake, name
Reform).’ ”

But Byron’s thoughts of England are not
often of this general kind at all. They are

usually focussed on one or another of his cherished animosities. It may be Wellington:

“ You are ‘ the best of cut-throats : ’—do not start ;

The phrase is Shakespeare’s, and not mis-applied :—

War’s a brain-spattering, windpipe-slitting art,

Unless her cause by right be sanctified.

If you have acted *once* a generous part,

The World, not the World’s masters, will decide,

And I shall be delighted to learn who,

Save you and yours, have gained by Waterloo? ”

or, more probably, it is his favourite aversion, Southey, with his friends of the Lake School, so called, Byron presumed, because its members had not yet finished their education:

“ Bob Southey! You’re a poet—Poet-laureate,

And representative of all the race ;

Although ’tis true that you turned out a Tory at

Last,—yours has lately been a common case ;

And now, my Epic Renegade! what are ye
at?

With all the Lakers, in and out of place?
A nest of tuneful persons, to my eye
Like 'four and twenty Blackbirds in a pye;

" 'Which pye being opened they began to
sing,'

(This old song and new simile holds good),
'A dainty dish to set before the King,'

Or Regent, who admires such kind of
food;—

And Coleridge, too, has lately taken wing,
But like a hawk encumbered with his
hood,—

Explaining Metaphysics to the nation—
I wish he would explain his Explanation.

• • • • • • •
"And Wordsworth, in a rather long 'Ex-
cursion,'

(I think the quarto holds five hundred
pages),

Has given a sample from the vasty version
Of his new system to perplex the sages;

'Tis poetry—at least by his assertion,
And may appear so when the dog-star
rages—

And he who understands it would be able
To add a story to the Tower of Babel."

Which he follows with the rather perverse challenge:

“Scott, Rogers, Campbell, Moore and Crabbe,
will try
'Gainst you the question with posterity.”

Sometimes his disaffection expresses itself negatively, in such a poem as that *On the Star of the Legion of Honour*, or in some celebration of Napoleon, such as:

“There sunk the greatest, nor the worst of
men,
Whose Spirit, authentically mixed,
One moment of the mightiest, and again
On little objects with like firmness fixed;
Extreme in all things! hadst thou been
betwixt,
Thy throne had still been thine, or never
been;
For Daring made thy rise as fall: thou
seek'st
Even now to re-assume the imperial mien,
And shake again the world, the Thunderer
of the scene!”

And sometimes it renews the specific quarrel with Lady Byron, with such not very persuasive emphasis as—

“. . . Even upon such a basis hast thou
 built
 A monument, whose cement hath been
 guilt!
 The moral Clytemnestra of thy lord,
 And hewed down, with an unsuspected
 sword,
 Fame, peace, and hope—and all the better
 life
 Which, but for this cold treason of thy
 heart,
 Might still have risen from out the grave of
 strife,
 And found a nobler duty than to
 part. . . .”

But the sum of all these moods, ranging from
 rather unimpressive complaint to extremely
 impressive challenge, was that Byron was at
 odds with the world, and that the source of his
 alienation was the conduct of his own country
 towards him. Childe Harold sometimes, no
 doubt, played impresario to his emotions. But
 there are a great many passages in the Pil-
 grimage that have the truth of poetry on
 them, and this is one of them, and per-
 haps says as good a last word as can be found
 about his spiritual character as an exile:

“I have not loved the World, nor the World
me;
I have not flattered its rank breath, nor
bowed
To its idolatries a patient knee,
Nor coined my cheek to smiles,—nor cried
aloud
In worship of an echo: in the crowd
They could not deem me one of such—I
stood
Among them, but not of them—in a
shroud
Of thoughts which were not their thoughts,
and still could,
Had I not filed my mind, which thus itself
subdued.

“I have not loved the World, nor the World
me,—
But let us part fair foes; I do believe,
Though I have found them not, that there
may be
Words which are things,—hopes which will
not deceive,
And Virtues which are merciful, nor weave
Snares for the failing; I would also deem
O’er others’ griefs that some sincerely
grieve—

That two, or one, are almost what they
seem,—

That Goodness is no name—and Happiness
no dream.”

This note must not be expanded into a dissertation on Byron, but his case is instructive in our present purpose. Before the disturbance and separation of 1816 he had published his juvenile poems, some of his narratives in verse, such as *The Giaour* and *The Bride of Abydos*, the *English Bards and Scotch Reviewers*, and the first two cantos of *Childe Harold's Pilgrimage*. In these he had shown some poetic sensibility, he had displayed his gift for effective story-telling, had shown himself a satirist to be reckoned with, and with the cantos of *Childe Harold* (1812) had made himself famous as a poet. But in none of these works did he discover any decided poetic character, nor did he reveal any very notable constructive power. He was already attracting general attention in literature and society, but this rather as a picturesque young nobleman affecting a romantic and brilliant melancholy, with a pen of great graphic facility, and with a telling wit, as, if one may put it so, the most Byronic figure

of his time, than because of any commanding achievement. In these earlier works there is little to show whether the emotion of patriotism meant anything to him or not; but what indications there are point to a soundness of heart. He joins Wordsworth in denouncing the Convention of Cintra (at which the advantages of the victory of the English and Spanish forces over Napoleon at Vimiera were thrown away by what both poets considered to be pusillanimous negotiations):

“Convention is the dwarfish demon styled
That foiled the knights in Marialva’s
dome:
Of brains (if brains they had) he them
beguiled,
And turned a nation’s shallow joy to
gloom.
Here Folly dashed to earth the victor’s
plume,
And Policy regained what arms had lost:
For chiefs like ours in vain may laurels
bloom!
Woe to the conquering, not the conquered
host,
Since baffled Triumph droops on Lusitania’s
coast.

“And ever since that martial Synod met,
 Britannia sickens, Cintra! at thy name;
 And folks in office at the mention fret,
 And fain would blush, if blush they could,
 for shame.
 How will Posterity the deed proclaim!
 Will not our own and fellow-nations
 sneer,
 To view these champions cheated of their
 fame,
 By foes in fight o’erthrown, yet victors
 here,
 Where Scorn her finger points through many
 a coming year?”

And when he is denouncing the removal of
 the “Elgin Marbles” from Greece, he rejoices
 that the vandal is not English, thus in the
 second canto of *Childe Harold*:

“But who, of all the plunderers of yon Fane
 On high—where Pallas lingered, loth to
 flee
 The latest relic of her ancient reign—
 The last, the worst, dull spoiler, who was
 he?
 Blush, Caledonia! such thy son could
 be!

England! I joy no child he was of thine:
Thy free-born men should spare what once
was free;

Yet they could violate each saddening
shrine,

And bear these altars o'er the long-reluctant
brine. . . ."

and again in *The Curse of Minerva*:

"Daughter of Jove! in Britain's injured
name,

A true-born Briton may the deed disclaim.

Frown not on England; England owns him
not:

Athena, no! thy plunderer was a Scot. . . ."

The distinction seems fine-spun to us to-day, but it meant something in Byron's mind. Beyond these stray notes, however, there is little to suggest that the poet cared more about his State as such before than he did after his exile, and his poetry is always very little sensitive to English landscape. But it is interesting to note that already there is an active response to national sentiment, though not English national sentiment. The early cantos of *Childe Harold* always take fire when Byron is responding to the national spirit of the countries in which he is travelling,

"Awake, ye Sons of Spain! awake! advance!
 Lo! Chivalry, your ancient Goddess,
 cries,
 But wields not, as of old, her thirsty
 lance,
 Nor shakes her crimson plumage in the
 skies:
 Now on the smoke of blazing bolts she
 flies,
 And speaks in thunder through yon en-
 gine's roar:
 In every peal she calls—'Awake! arise!'
 Say, is her voice more feeble than of yore,
 When her war-song was heard on Andalu-
 sia's shore?"

Such passages are frequent, and their emotion is evident. The year of Byron's domestic crisis, 1816, was also a year of notable maturing in his poetry. The one circumstance may or may not have been the cause of the other, but the third and fourth cantos of *Childe Harold*, which belong to this year, show beyond question an immense advance from his previous work. And now the few strays of specifically English loyalty vanish, as we have seen, but the sense of nationality as a general principle is develop-

ing, as it was to do until his death in Greece with the one unimpeachably heroic gesture of his life. And so Byron, rebel and angry rebel as he was, provoked from his fortitude by what we may admit were for the most part exasperating causes, but still too often rather a poor figure in his resentments, cannot be dismissed as wholly deficient in the patriotic virtues. He did not love England, but, exile and wanderer as he was, he never became a merely cynical cosmopolitan. It is perhaps no sufficient justification to say that he would have loved England had he been allowed to, but such a thought does not make too heavy demands on charity. He was an outcast—for that is what it amounted to—and his country's part in the matter was not a very pretty one. He did not whine about it, but he did not hesitate in abuse. He became, on personal and not on public grounds, a vivid representative of minority opinion, and he had not the greatness of character necessary to see and cherish the nobler England behind the chattering tribes of his persecutors. But in resigning the governing emotion of patriotism, a love of his own country, he did so with a sense of loss, a sense that he vindicated as completely as he could at Missolonghi. It is

not to strain reason unduly to see in him an example of the tenacity of the essential instinct of patriotism in men of large mould, in the face of adversity not only of circumstance but also of character.

Shelley's case is another matter altogether. He, too, was an exile, and with him, too, strong personal reasons aggravated his non-conformity of opinion. But his own misfortunes merely emphasised his natural character in certain directions; he did not abandon any loyalties because of them, nor did he allow them to taint his insurgency with spleen. Tyranny, which in fact was common enough in Shelley's England, was a spectre that haunted his imagination continually, and it informed much of his work from the beginning. It is, for example, the principal motive of *Queen Mab*. In 1816, Shelley then being twenty-four years of age, he became involved in events that have been the subject of controversy ever since, a controversy that need not be followed here. But Shelley, like Byron and with a clearer mind than Byron's, felt that he had been outraged by society, society as represented by the law. In 1817 Shelley's application for his children after Harriet's death was referred to the Court of

Chancery, and Lord Eldon refused him the desired custody. Shelley considered this to be a gross abuse of power, and an act of wanton legal cruelty; and most humane people will agree with him. Tastes differ, but if Shelley had been my father, and a judge had deprived me of the privilege of being brought up under his influence, I should feel very disobliged to him for his solicitude. And Shelley in his *Lines to the Lord Chancellor* made his protest in set terms:

“Thy country’s curse is on thee! Justice
sold,
Truth trampled, Nature’s landmarks over-
thrown,
And heaps of fraud-accumulated gold
Plead, loud as thunder, at Destruction’s
throne.

.

“Oh, let a father’s curse be on thy soul,
And let a daughter’s hope be on thy
tomb;
Be both on thy gray head, a leaden
cowl,
To weigh thee down to thine approaching
doom!

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“ I curse thee by a parent’s outraged love.
By hopes long cherished and too lately
lost,
By gentle feelings thou couldst never
prove,
By griefs which thy stern nature never
crossed ;

.

“ By those unpractised accents of young
speech,
Which he who is a father thought to
frame
To gentlest lore, such as the wisest teach—
Thou strike the lyre of mind!—oh, grief
and shame!

“ By all the happy see in children’s growth—
That undeveloped flower of budding
years—
Sweetness and sadness interwoven both,
Source of the sweetest hopes and saddest
fears—

“ By all the days, under an hireling’s care,
Of dull constraint and bitter heaviness,—
O wretched ye if ever any were,—
Sadder than orphans, yet not fatherless!

“ By the false cant which on their innocent
lips

Must hang like poison on an opening
bloom,

By the dark creeds which cover with eclipse
Their pathway from the cradle to the
tomb—

• • • • •
“ By all the hate which checks a father’s
love—

By all the scorn which kills a father’s
care—

By those most impious hands which dared
remove

Natures high bounds—by thee—and by
despair—

“ Yes, the despair which bids a father groan,
And cry, ‘ My children are no longer
mine—

The blood within those veins may be mine
own,

But—Tyrant—their polluted souls are
thine;—’

“ I curse thee—though I hate thee not.—O
slave!

If thou couldst quench the earth-con-
suming Hell

Of which thou art a dæmon, on thy grave
This curse should be a blessing. Fare
thee well!"

The poetical art of this need not be discussed here, but there are points in these verses for our notice. Although Shelley is labouring under great immediate distress, the temper is consistent with the normal habit of his mind, and while the sense of injustice done to himself is working strongly within him, there is an undercurrent of loathing of the principle of injustice in general. It is not to impute any weakness in passion to him to say that we feel that he would very likely have written with as much vehement conviction if the calamity had befallen a friend instead of himself. The occasion of the verses is personal enough; with Byron the inspiration, we feel, would have been personal hatred of Eldon, justified it may be, but a little gross in its splendour; with Shelley there is personal antagonism too, but the inspiration now rises to real moral indignation. As Byron might have presented the case, our sympathy would probably have been with him as in a personal quarrel; as Shelley presents it we side with an eternal principle of justice against tyranny and darkness.

Shelley returns to his country often in his poetry, and it is generally in this mood of political indignation, and not merely with a sense of personal injury. *The Masque of Anarchy* is indignation's epic, and it is purely inspired by love of humanity. Moreover, it has nothing of the sullen temper that so often seems to be brooding behind Byron's witty malice. Shelley has no thought for his own fortunes in such passages as:

“ ‘What art thou, Freedom? O! could slaves
Answer from their living graves
This demand—tyrants would flee
Like a dream's dim imagery:

.
“ ‘For the labourer thou art bread,
And a comely table spread
From his daily labour come
In a neat and happy home.

“ ‘Thou art clothes, and fire, and food
For the trampled multitude—
No—in countries that are free
Such starvation cannot be
As in England now we see.

“ ‘To the rich thou art a check,
When his foot is on the neck
Of his victim, thou dost make
That he treads upon a snake.

“ Men of England, wherefore plough
For the lords who lay ye low?
Wherefore weave with toil and care
The rich robes your tyrants wear?

.

“ Shrink to your cellars, holes, and cells;
In halls ye deck another dwells.
Why shake the chains ye wrought? Ye see
The steel ye tempered glance on ye.

“ With plough and spade, and hoe and loom,
Trace your grave, and build your tomb
And weave your winding-sheet, till fair
England be your sepulchre.”

In direct personal attack he could when he liked rival Byron himself, as in this of Castle-reagh and one of his colleagues:

“ As a shark and dog-fish wait
Under an Atlantic isle,
For the negro-ship, whose freight
Is the theme of their debate,
Wrinkling their red gills the while—

“ Are ye, two vultures sick for battle,
Two scorpions under one wet stone,
Two bloodless wolves whose dry throats
rattle,

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Two crows perched on the murrained cattle,
Two vipers tangled into one. . . .”

which may well be matched with Byron’s:

“The intellectual eunuch Castlereagh . . .
Cold-blooded, smooth-faced, placid mis-
creant,”

and Shelley’s own:

“I met murder on the way—
He had a mask like Castlereagh. . . .”

Against which view in general of the unfortunate Castlereagh Mr. Charles Whibley, it may be noted, has made a telling defence in his *Political Portraits*. Personal animus is, however, rarely the theme of Shelley’s poetry, and even Castlereagh and his like are symbols of evil rather than characters to him. Further, Shelley never wholly loses sight of the England that is worthy of the patriot’s love. Thus, in addressing Liberty, he says:

“. . . And England’s prophets hailed thee as
their queen,
In songs whose music cannot pass away,
Though it must flow forever: not unseen
Before the spirit-sighted countenance

Of Milton didst thou pass, from the sad
scene

Beyond whose night he saw, with a de-
jected mien."

And still beyond this, he very splendidly realises, in a speech given to Hampden in *Charles the First*, the idea of the patriotism that over-rides all differences between the State and the citizen, the love that survives all disillusionment:

" . . . The boundless universe
Becomes a cell too narrow for the soul
That owns no master; while the loathliest
ward
Of this wide prison, England, is a nest
Of cradling peace built on the mountain
tops,—
To which the eagle spirits of the free,
Which range through heaven and earth, and
scorn the storm
Of time, and gaze upon the light of truth,
Return to brood on thoughts that cannot
die
And cannot be repelled."

Finally, Shelley's love of the English countryside, formed in his boyhood, although

it was merged in his Italian life and the immaterial landscape so prevalent in his poetry, was never wholly supplanted by these. The scenery of *Alastor* (1815) may ostensibly belong to Caucasus, but much of it is in reality drawn from the Thames country where the poem was written. Mary Shelley in her note to *Alastor* says:

“ . . . Accompanied by a few friends, he visited the source of the Thames, making a voyage in a wherry from Windsor to Crickdale. His beautiful stanzas in the churchyard of Lechlade were written on that occasion. *Alastor* was composed on his return. He spent his days under the oak-shades of Windsor Great Park; and the magnificent woodland was a fitting study to inspire the various descriptions of forest-scenery we find in the poem. . . .”

and the aptness of her remark is shown, for example, in these lines:

“ . . . The noonday sun
Now shone upon the forest, one vast mass
Of mingling shade, whose brown magnificence
A narrow vale embosoms. . . .

.

The meeting boughs and implicated leaves
Wove twilight o'er the Poet's path, as led
By love, or dream, or god, or mightier Death,
He sought in Nature's dearest haunt, some
bank,

Her cradle, and his sepulchre. More dark
And dark the shades accumulate. The oak,
Expanding its immense and knotty arms,
Embraces the light beech. The pyramids
Of the tall cedar overarching, frame
Most solemn domes within, and far below,
Like clouds suspended in an emerald sky,
The ash and the acacia floating hang
Tremulous and pale. . . ."

Five years later, not long before his death,
Shelley could still write:

"And in the warm hedge grew lush eglantine,
Green cowbind and the moonlight-coloured
may,
And cherry-blossoms, and white cups, whose
wine
Was the bright dew, yet drained not by
the day;
And wild roses, and ivy serpentine,
With its dark buds and leaves, wandering
astray;

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And flowers azure, black, and streaked with
gold,

Fairer than any wakened eyes behold.”

Although he had long left England, the source of the imagery is obvious.

So that both in his political and his pastoral moods, Shelley, exile as he was, never disowned his English heritage. He was a rebel in political thought, but he rebelled against England because he loved and not because he hated her. He did not allow his own misfortunes, although he conceived them to be largely of her making, to embitter his exposure of her errors. His challenge was one of liberal indignation, not of narrow resentments, and he longed as eagerly as Blake for a regenerate England. Where Byron loved a controversy, Shelley loved the people. And he would, for all his exile, have chosen England for his new world if he could have created it, a world that should realise his own mystical ideal of *Political Greatness*:

“Nor happiness, nor majesty, nor fame,
Nor peace, nor strength, nor skill in arms
or arts,
Shepherd those herds whom tyranny makes
tame;

Verse echoes not one beating of their hearts,
History is but the shadow of their shame,
Art veils her glass, or from the pageant
starts

As to oblivion their blind millions fleet,
Staining that Heaven with obscene imagery
Of their own likeness. What are numbers
knit

By force or custom? Man who man would
be,

Must rule the empire of himself; in it
Must be supreme, establishing his throne
On vanquished will, quelling the anarchy
Of hopes and fears, being himself alone."

He was a citizen of the world who wrote that, or, in his own phrase, a pilgrim of eternity; but he also was an Englishman, from whom some of the profoundest lessons of patriotic virtue may be learnt.

CHAPTER VII

CONCLUSION

WHAT, it may be asked by some practical dispositions, is after all the use of this patriotism in the world? What, indeed, is to be gained, and gain counts for so much in our competitive society, by fostering an emotion so ideal, so incalculable—still less what is to be gained by analysing it, by endeavouring to define the principles on which it is founded?

And the answer to these questions may be opened by an admission. It is, we will allow, just as easy to over-estimate the importance of a virtue so little susceptible to ledger reckonings as it is to under-estimate it. It has, I hope, been made clear that the patriotism which has been the subject of this essay is something more than the utilitarian compact made between the citizens of a State for the purposes of defence against foreign encroachments. The patriotism of our inquiry

is a spiritual force, a mood, an energy that aims at no material advantages, a delight as natural and uncalculating as the pleasure we take in sunlight or sound limbs. And first let us consider how this ideal virtue may be too highly rated.

Whenever we contemplate any moral quality intellectually, we are apt to suppose that it occupies a greater place in the conduct of life than it actually does. Temperance reformers (not, be it said, abolitionists with fish-like eyes) come to imagine that reform of the drink traffic is the governing preoccupation of mankind. Advocates of birth control think that the intelligence of the world is centred upon their cherished panacea. The association that canvasses my support for regulation of the incidence of income tax is convinced that relief in this direction would solve the problems of life for me; which it might do, but doubtfully. But the truth is that, allowing for the urgency of all these questions, and urgent they are, they fill at last but a little corner of our daily being. And the same thing must be confessed of the far more essential necessity of patriotism. In discussing it we have to realise that in the common habit of our days we are very little

concerned as to whether we are patriots or not. The question, in the busy court which is the average citizen's life, would be ruled out as irrelevant.

This average citizen's time is occupied chiefly in keeping pace with the demands of routine, a routine of primary importance. He has to earn his living, order his household, and meet his share of the common obligations of society. To realise what a normal week in the life of the ordinary citizen means in the way of squaring accounts, keeping appointments, answering letters, looking after his health, repaying civilities, providing for emergencies and domestic responsibilities, answering silly questions, seeking and giving counsel, keeping himself clean, getting his boots mended, and not losing his train ticket, is to be astonished at the volcanic enterprise of humanity. When all these things have been competently dealt with, our citizen has very little margin of attention for tariff or drink reform, or for abstract problems of hygiene or patriotism. And yet there is some margin, and it is the activity within this margin that finally decides the progress of the world.

Every substantial reform in society has had its origin in this activity. Each stage of

civilisation is troubled by abuses which the majority of people accept as necessary evils, or, more exactly, to which they pay no attention. And then the margin of social consciousness begins to work upon this abuse or that, and perseveres in its attack until the abuse is removed. A hundred and twenty years ago gentle and honourable people in England were not in the least disturbed that a starving man should be hanged for stealing a sheep, or a child for stealing a pocket-handkerchief. It was the law, they supposed vaguely, and there was nothing to be done about it. It was distressing for the victims, but the thing plainly was not to steal sheep or handkerchiefs. And then a few visionaries questioned the fitness of the penalty, and they insisted upon their questions until the penalty was repealed. The margin of social consciousness had done its immediate work, and turned its attention to other reforms, such as the mitigation of child labour and the game-laws. And so the adjustment goes on from age to age. The fathers of this generation would have been convulsed by the spectacle of women sitting in Parliament; to-day the presence of a woman in the Cabinet hardly engages the attention of the newspaper para-

graphists. I remember my own grandfather, a cherished figure of patriarchal benevolence, complaining that far too many concessions were being made to industrial employees; I wonder what he would have thought of the latest Workmen's Compensation (or is it Employers' Liability?) Act and the advent of a Labour Government.

Shelley, in proclaiming poets to be the unacknowledged legislators of the world, hit upon the truth also about the microcosm that is every man. Shelley was thinking of the profound, and often indefinable, influence that the poets, working unknown in any familiar way to the mass of the community, and generally without any immediate concern of the community in their minds, have upon the body of mankind. There is, for example, no measuring the degree in which the average Englishman of to-day, who may never willingly have read a line of poetry, has been affected in his character and ambitions by Shakespeare and Milton. The influence is not to be looked for in any direct lesson he may have learnt from these poets, but in the way in which they, powerfully creating in that margin of the social consciousness of which we have spoken, have gradually impressed the normal

habit of the entire national character. And so it is with the individual man, sympathetically to the principles of modern science, since he is himself in many things an epitome of the State, and not least remarkably in this. Many a man, whose preoccupations are with the wage-earning routine and the social recreations of life, is governed, in a degree of which he is seldom deliberately conscious at all, by the poet in himself. Patriotism, religion, art, social reform, philosophic meditation, these are things to which he devotes but a very little part of his active attention. They belong to that margin of his consciousness which is outside the crowded business of his life and into which he strays but at infrequent intervals. There are a few men always in the community who bring to these ideal occupations the full resources of their energy; but with most men this is not so. The poet in most men is, they would themselves believe, but a very obscure and shadowy figure in the counsels of their minds; often, indeed, they might even be surprised to hear of his presence there at all. And yet the influence of this poet in man upon his daily character, however involved that character may be with the tedium and even the grossness of competitive

life, is altogether incalculable. It is in these hours of escape that we refresh ourselves in hope and establish ourselves in courage. The virtues of merely physical recreation are now generally admitted even by the most exacting disciplinarians of industry, and measures are taken to encourage them. But intellectual and spiritual recreation have to be designed by each man for himself, and civilisation is steadily saved from the worst consequences of its own greed and fear by the fact that almost every man does so design them. It is with the inspiration gathered in these marginal hours that he is able to survive the wretched conspiracies in which he finds himself forced to play a part. The ordinary day's work is too often anything but ennobling in its nature, but it is to the outstanding honour of the average citizen that somehow or another he does not become degraded by degrading conditions. And he fortifies himself to this heroic achievement, for heroic it is, chiefly in those seasons when the poet in him assumes control of his mind. So it is with patriotism. Loyal citizens everywhere give but an occasional thought to the love of country and patriotic ideals. But the occasional thought when it comes is not a trivial accident. It

wells up from the depths of nature, and its influence flows on through character and conduct. The good man is no more consciously a patriot all the time than he is consciously a teller of the truth. But there are times when to speak the truth is a deliberate and exacting virtue that reinforces the habit in the good man's mind. And there are times when a man is confronted with some problem of public service and deals with it finely, or when his reason investigates the nature of patriotic love, and it is from these times that he takes back with him to the routine of life an inspiration that, though it may seem to be latent, will steadily inform his character at every turn.

The ideal nature of patriotism can only be preserved through mutual respect and understanding between all the Estates of the Realm. If the King, or elected head of the State, is tyrannous or weak or corrupt, the figure that is set up for the citizen's homage is divested of half its virtue and will inspire a weakened patriotic sentiment. Not only must the sovereign think wisely on public affairs, and exercise what right he has in the choice of counsellors with discretion, but he should also cherish highly the graces of be-

haviour towards any citizens who may have the honour of personal communication with him. The present age has been fortunate in examples of such royal courtesy. Sovereigns, even the staunchest of them, have not always been very considerate in these matters. Elizabeth was a great patriot, but she must sometimes have tried the patriotism of others somewhat severely. One of her Ministers, on being offered an order by a foreign Court asked the Queen whether he might accept the honour, and was told that she meant her dogs to wear her collars. He was a very sound fellow if he kept his love of England unimpaired by the affront. George III can hardly be placed beside Elizabeth as a patriot, and yet he sometimes seems to have had a happier trick of engaging a subject's good-will. When Samuel Johnson visited him, the King paid a handsome compliment to the great writer's talents. On being asked afterwards whether he said anything in suitable acknowledgment, Johnson replied: "No, Sir . . . it was not for me to bandy civilities with my sovereign." However large a share of the credit of the occasion may be Johnson's own, the story puts kingship in a very agreeable light.

Wisdom and courtesy in the head of the

State must be supported by the public virtue of Ministers. A good king, whether the monarchy be constitutional or otherwise, is powerless with corrupt or stupid and uneducated Ministers. The Government of a country is responsible for securing those conditions of justice and order in which alone public or private virtues can flourish in steady vigour. If the Ministers neglect these conditions the significance of the whole constitution, of which the King or other head of the State is the Symbol, is obscured, and the minds of the people are distracted and easily seduced. Wordsworth has given us the character of the happy warrior; he may also give us the character of the happy statesman.

“The Poet, fostering for his native land
Such hope, entreats that servants may abound
Of those pure altars worthy; ministers
Detached from pleasure, to the love of gain
Superior, insusceptible of pride,
And by ambitious longings undisturbed;
Men, whose delight is where their duty leads
Or fixes them; whose least distinguished day
Shines with some portion of that heavenly
lustre
Which makes the sabbath lovely in the sight
Of blessed angels, pitying human cares. . . .”

Finally, the citizens themselves must realise and keep their share of the contract. They, ultimately, are the State. Good sovereignty and good government must always go far towards making a happy and right-minded people, but this consummation depends at last upon the good-will and spiritual enterprise of every individual citizen under their governance. Counsels of perfection are so easy, perfection is impossible, and yet familiarity with ideals has constantly in history helped a little way towards the ideals themselves. There is not one of us but has to account daily for a hundred imperfections of character, jealousies, resentments and conceits. We, nevertheless, always have at our hand some better self that we believe may on the whole keep the balance even at least, and upon which the hope of the world is founded. If it were not so there would be no courage left among men, and, as has already been said, it is man's courage in the face of difficulty and disaster and uncertainty of every kind that is at once the noblest, the most common, and the most impressive spectacle in the world.

There remains for our present purpose one question to be asked. How should patriotism

be a thing to be fostered in the world alongside the activities of man's mind which might be supposed to embrace and transcend all its particular virtues? The poet, the scientist, the saint, the prophet of international brotherhood, are not these familiar with a habit of mind in which the needs of patriotism are no longer evident, in which, indeed, the patriotic idea may seem to be an obstacle in the way of larger vision? The advocate of internationalism who is included in this company has nothing to do with the so-called cosmopolitan already mentioned, who out of mere intellectual caprice, inflamed perhaps by economic uncertainty, intrigues with this country and that without any stability of affection anywhere, and remains as much a smatterer as other kinds of tourists. The man we are speaking of is he who after long political study and experience devotes himself to international solidarity as the ideal ambition of public service; such a man as Woodrow Wilson or Lord Robert Cecil. And if the answer to our question should be found to be that if all men were poets, or vowed to the disinterested pursuit of knowledge, or truly religious, or masters of universal policy, then patriotic inspiration would be no longer needed

in the world, we are still left with the further question whether, since most men are not consistently any of these things, the emotion does not remain, on grounds of expediency at least, desirable for the majority? If the wider loyalties be beyond the grasp of most men, is it not well that they should cherish the narrower one? The raising of our second question will depend upon the answer to our first; we shall, I think, see that it is not necessary to raise it at all.

The poets, it is true, in their speculations about life have commonly considered man as man, and not as an American or a Greek or an Englishman. The smallest acquaintance with poetry will establish this fact beyond doubt. Religious men, again, even when they have considered acts or doctrines subversive of morality in immediate political practice, have made their protests in the name of God with universal rather than national application. When John Wesley denounces Machiavelli, it is with no fear of what might happen to his own country if such a political gospel were accepted. It is his general sense of decency that is offended:

“. . . I weighed the sentiments that were less common; transcribed the pas-

sages wherein they were contained; compared one passage with another, and endeavoured to form a cool, impartial judgment. And my cool judgment is, that if all the other doctrines of devils which have been committed to writing since letters were in the world, were collected together in one volume, it would fall short of this; and that should a Prince form himself by this book, so calmly recommending hypocrisy, treachery, lying, robbery, oppression, adultery, whoredom, and murder of all kinds, Domitian or Nero would be an angel of light compared to that man."

Sir Ronald Ross, discovering the malaria germ in the mosquito and recording what he knows to be the promise of an immeasurable alleviation of pain in a hymn of thanksgiving, does not do so as an Englishman, but as a scientist of the world. And Woodrow Wilson, evangelising the League of Nations, becomes at once a ready mark for the criticism that he cares more about an abstract social idea than about the concrete reality of America. And yet the answer that these men have gone beyond the necessity and the desire for the virtue

of patriotism will not serve. Patriotism is not, and never can be, merely a less intensified form of some other emotion. It is a plain fact of human experience that you cannot love people you do not know as well as you love the chosen among those whom you do know. You may with the utmost devotion seek to learn all about the stranger, to be just to him, to recognise his rights, to help him in affliction, and to realise all the subtle ties by which his interests are bound up with your own. You may, in short, be a devout and valuable apostle of international doctrine, and you may so conduct yourself that your occasional glimpses of the stranger himself will be graced by courtesy and even affection. But when all is said and done, you cannot love him as you do the tried friends and kinsfolk of your daily intercourse, and it is a mere philosophic pedantry to pretend that you can. And the same thing is true of a man's home-land. It was no idle phrase that was heard on Sinai: "*Honour thy father and thy mother: that thy days may be long in the land that the Lord thy God hath given thee.*" And the man who least loves his own land will, let it again be said, least love the world. It is this love which is one of the foundations of character

from which can proceed all other loves whatever. All the wisdom of America is to-day deeply concerned with the problem of instilling into the millions of its as yet unabsorbed alien population an emotion which is not extolled as a means of national aggrandisement, or even of national security, but as the surest hope of a clean, constructive, and generous national spirit; in a word, of national happiness. And the poets and prophets, who do not confuse patriotism with fears and cupidity, and who look with loving eyes from their own consecrated thresholds to the farthest horizons, know, too, how indispensably their dreams are conditioned by this first and abiding loyalty.

NOTES AS TO BOOKS CONSULTED

Anything like an extended bibliography in connection with this essay would be misplaced. It would mean, for example, in the case of the many poets quoted, no more than an unnecessary elaboration of the Index printed elsewhere. Hobbes's *Leviathan* is to be obtained in more than one well-known series of cheap reprints. Bolingbroke's most important essays on Patriotism have recently been reprinted in popular form by the Clarendon Press. The copyright poem by Sir William Watson, on page 192, which I have quoted in full, appears by the courtesy of the author and Mr. John Lane. I have, I think, otherwise not exceeded the customary rights of quotation from living authors, but I none the less thank them one and all for the permission which I know they would have given me had I thought it necessary to trouble them by asking for it.

Readers who may wish to study the subject of this essay beyond the suggestions that I have been able to throw out, will find a long

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and useful list of books in Sir Henry Hadow's *Citizenship*, also published by the Clarendon Press, and a companion volume to Mr. Fisher's book on the *Common Weal* to which I have referred. The quotations from *Euripides* and the Greek Anthology, on pages 57, 104 and 160, are from the translations respectively of Professor Gilbert Murray and Mr. J. W. Mackail.

J. D.

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